

Patient information factsheet

Safe use of bed rails in hospital

This factsheet contains important information about the safe use of bed rails in hospital.

What are bed rails?

Bed rails are rails that can be attached to the sides of hospital beds and trolleys to help some people stay safe while in bed.



Bed rails are routinely kept down but can be raised if a person:

- is at risk of, or is worried about, falling out of bed
- needs to be moved to a different location while in bed (or on a trolley)
- needs some extra help moving around in bed
- would like bed rails and we feel that it is safe for the person to have them

What are the benefits of using bed rails?

Bed rails are designed to reduce the risk of some people rolling, slipping, sliding, or falling from bed and potentially injuring themselves.

What are the risks of using bed rails?

Bed rails are not suitable for everyone staying in hospital. Bed rails are only recommended if the benefits of using them outweigh the risks.

Risks of using bed rails include:

- getting your head, neck or chest trapped in between the bed rails
- hurting yourself by climbing or trying to climb over the top of the bed rails
- injuring yourself against the bed rails while moving around in bed (for example, scrapes, cuts and bruises)
- feeling distressed (for example, feeling trapped by the bed rails)

Patient information factsheet

Who will decide if I need bed rails?

A member of your healthcare team will complete an individual bed rail risk assessment to determine whether bed rails are suitable for you and will discuss this with you. Where possible, you will be involved in the decision about whether you have bed rails in place. This assessment will be reviewed regularly during your stay in hospital.

Are there any alternatives to using bed rails?

There are some alternatives to using bed rails that can help reduce the risk of injuries. These include:

- lowering the bed so it is nearer to the floor
- placing crash mats (padded mats) on the floor around the bed in case a person rolls out
- having padded bumpers (soft covers) over the bed rails for protection

A member of your healthcare team will discuss these alternatives with you if necessary.

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns about bed rails while in hospital, please speak to a member of staff on the ward you are being cared for on.

If you are a patient at one of our hospitals and need this document translated, or in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **0800 484 0135** or email **patientsupporthub@uhs.nhs.uk**

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**

Join our family of charity supporters with a monthly donation! It's a wonderful way to show your ongoing support of our patients and staff.

Scan the QR code or visit southamptonhospitalscharity.org/donate



**Southampton
Hospitals
Charity**

Charity Registration Numbers 1051543

