

Appendix K: Components and Example of Universal Falls Precautions

Table 21 lists common components included in universal falls precautions. Health-care organizations can determine which precautions are applicable to their setting. The list in **Table 21** and the poster that follows are examples only.

Table 21: Common Components of Universal Falls Precautions

General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Familiarize the person with the environment ■ Provide instruction on using the call bell ■ Mobilize when possible ■ Provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Sturdy handrails in patient bathrooms, rooms, and hallways □ Adequate lighting (night light, supplemental lighting as needed) □ Uncluttered care areas □ All areas cleared of tripping hazards □ Incontinence precautions (safe and regular toileting)
Bed/chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low position (at the height of the knee or appropriate height when following hip precautions*) ■ Brakes locked (bed or chair) ■ Bottom bed rails down (for split rail*) unless assessed otherwise ■ Items within reach (personal items and call bell/light) ■ Document transfers/mobility assistance
Slipping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Non-slip, supportive footwear with a low heel ■ Clean, dry floor surfaces ■ Prompt clean-up of spills

Sources: Degelau et al., 2012; Scott, 2013; Wallis & Campbell, 2011.

* Provided by the expert panel.

Example: Universal Falls Precautions Poster from Fraser Health (British Columbia, Canada)



Safe environment

- Bottom bed rails down unless assessed otherwise
- Pathways clear of clutter and tripping hazards
- Bed and chair brakes are “on”
- Lights are working and “on” as required

Assist with mobility

- Mobilize at least twice/day
- Transfer / mobility assist **posted**
- Glasses, hearing and mobility aids within reach

Fall risk reduction

- Intentional Hourly Rounding (see other side)
- Safe and **regular toileting**
- Call bell **and personal items** in patient’s reach
- Bed lowered to **patient’s knee height**
- Non-skid footwear in use

Engage patient and family

- Discuss risk factors with patients and families
- Agree on a **Fall and Injury reduction plan**