

## What to Do When Falling in a Nursing Home

Tuesday, April 11, 2023.

In nursing homes, falls are not uncommon and can lead to serious ramifications for the health and welfare of inhabitants. Multiple steps are taken to ensure prompt and suitable care when a fall occurs. After evaluating the person's condition and deciding if urgent medical attention is needed, staff will assist them to back up or call for an ambulance if there is any sign of harm. Notifying designated contacts or family members of the event may also be necessary.



Later, personnel will document the incident and carry out a hazard assessment in order to pinpoint any variables that led to the fall such as balance, mobility, cognition, medicine regime, or environmental risks. Depending on their findings they will map out a plan to help prevent future falls; this could incorporate changes in medication doses, mobility aids, or adjustments to the environment.

As well as medically addressing their condition, it is important that staff provide emotional and psychological assistance too as falling can be very distressing; they should take time to listen to worries and concerns expressed by the resident and those close to them. In summary, when someone falls in a nursing home workers act quickly to guarantee safe healthcare is received, assess potential risk triggers, and devise strategies for prevention - whilst always providing moral support throughout.

### **The Most Common Causes of Falls**

There are two main categories into which the causes of falls in nursing homes can be grouped: medical conditions and environmental hazards.

#### **Medical conditions that can contribute to falls include the following:**

- Seizure disorders or epilepsy,
  - Being overweight or underweight,
  - Cognitive impairment,
  - History of falling,
  - A transient ischemic attack,
  - Weakness or balance issues,
  - Nerve damage,
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- Huntington's disease,
- Medications,
- Using a cane or walker,
- Active hip fracture, and
- Need for corrective lenses.

**The following environmental hazards can cause a resident to fall:**

- Cluttered room space,
- Defective wheelchair brakes,
- Improper bed height,
- Wet floors,
- Poor lighting,
- Uneven floors,
- No grab bars,
- Unstable furniture,
- Uneven floors,
- Poorly fitted shoes,
- Malfunctioning bed wheels, and
- Poorly maintained wheelchairs.

Sadly, in some cases, falls take place when nursing home staff are present. For instance, a resident needing two people to transfer them may face danger if only one assistant is available. This underscores the importance of having enough personnel to adhere to safety protocols and avoid potential injuries caused by falls. Unfortunately, many falls could have been prevented had these measures been taken ahead of time.

### **The Most Common Nursing Home Injuries**

Falls are incredibly debilitating for older adults. Even a low-impact fall can result in devastating injuries.

- Head injuries and traumatic brain injuries,
- Hip fractures,
- Contusions and lacerations, and
- Muscle strains and sprains.

Falls can cause severe damage or long-lasting conditions in some victims, even if they don't seem serious. As victims age, their injuries can take longer to heal and recovery can be more difficult. When someone is hospitalized after a fall, they may experience other complications such as catheter-associated UTI, pneumonia, or hospital-acquired infections. Additionally, transport and the hospital stay itself can put them at risk of contracting contagious viruses like COVID and the flu.

It is possible to bring a wrongful death lawsuit against the nursing home and the hospital if your family member dies after a fall-related injury.

### **Talk to an ATLINJ Georgia Nursing Home Abuse and Neglect Lawyer**

If you're considering legal action against a nursing home due to a loved one's fall, remember not all personal injury law firms are the same. You'll want to find a lawyer with experience handling these types of cases

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because that will help you get the best outcome possible. We have years of experience assisting injured victims like you, and we can walk you through what to expect throughout the legal process.

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