

Patient information

Bed Rails

What are bed rails?

Bed rails, also known as cot sides or side rails, are attached to the side of hospital beds.

What are the benefits of using bed rails?

Bedrails can reduce the risk of patients rolling, sliding, slipping, or falling out of bed and sustaining a serious injury from this.

They are used for:

- When people are being taken to another area on beds or hospital trolleys
- When recovering from anaesthetic, procedure, or sedation.

They may be considered:

- When a person's balance or safety in bed is affected by illness, condition, or medicine.
- At the persons request to give a feeling of security. They should still be able to move in bed and have the call bell in reach at all times to be able to ask for help when getting out of the bed.

However, bed rails are not suitable for every patient. Bed rails are only used if the benefits are greater than the risks.

Bed rails cannot be used to stop patients getting out of bed, even if the patient is at risk of falling when they walk.

What are the risks of using bed rails?

Risks may include the possibility of you or part of your body becoming trapped between the bed rails.

Some illnesses can make patients so confused that they might try to climb over a bedrail and injure themselves. If there is a possibility that a patient will try climb over a bedrail, it is safer not to use them.

Patient assessment for bed rail use

Patients will be assessed when they are admitted into hospital for the use of bed rails.

This assessment will take the patient's individual needs into account, and the suitability of bed rails will be agreed with the patient.

Are there any alternatives to bed rails?

Following a nursing assessment and discussion with the patient or relatives, if bed rails are considered unsuitable, the nurse may offer other alternatives:

- Moving the bed to a more visible part of the ward so staff can observe the patient more closely.
- Ensuring the nurse call buzzer is always within reach.
- Ensuring items required are within easy reach, so the patient does not have to stretch.
- Ensuring the bed is always in lowest position.
- Considering an ultra-low bed.
- Considering the use of assistive technology.

Advice for carers/relatives and friends

For the safety of patients, it would help us if visitors would report to staff any changes that they feel may affect the patient's safety. We ask that you:

- Replace nurse call buzzers if moved during visiting.
- Report patient disorientation to nursing staff before you leave.
- Ensure bed tables are replaced in reach of patient, if moved during visiting, so the patient doesn't have to overreach.

What if I want to know more?

If you have any questions about bed rails or preventing falls, please ask the ward staff, who will be happy to answer any queries.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities, please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo)

<https://www.accessable.co.uk>

