

Educating heart patients, families cut one hospital's falls by 64 percent

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Researchers at Vanderbilt University Medical Center had noticed that, despite a hospital-wide program to prevent patient falls, the cardiovascular progressive care unit experienced an increase in the rate of patient falls. To address the problem, investigators reviewed current literature about fall prevention and designed an education program. Using some basic guidelines from Ryu, Roche, and Brunton (2009), the program incorporated education for patients as well as families and included a booklet and a poster for each patient room.

In the two months before the program began, the fall rate was 12.73 per 1,000 patient days in the cardiovascular unit. In the two months after the patient/family [education](#) program began, the fall rate declined to 4.59 per 1,000 — a 64 percent reduction.

The patient information urges people to "Please call, don't fall." Patients were educated about factors putting them at risk for falling: experiencing a fall in the past three months, being older than 70 and having vision problems.

Further study will be needed to determine the long-term effect of the program, researchers said.

Provided by American Heart Association

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