

Patient Safety Regarding the

Bedside Commode



Key Facts About Falls :

Every year more than one out of every four adults, age 65 years and older, will fall.

Falls are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries in older adults.

Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Annually, the total cost of medical care due to fall related injuries totals more than \$50 billion.



Bedside Commodes are a Safety Hazard:

Although bedside commodes are intended to function as a preventative fall measure, improper practices, such as not sitting properly on the commode, can cause the use of a commode to jeopardize patient safety.

Bedside commodes that are left at the bedside can potentially lead to patient harm.

If left at bedside, the patient can trip and fall over the commode while en route to the bathroom.

Additionally, patients may not recognize the need for assistance when ambulating to the commode. Due to its close proximity, the patient is more inclined to independently transfer to a commode left at the bedside.

To promote patient safety and prevent falls, **bedside commodes should be left in the patient's bathroom,** and only brought to bedside when being used.



Fall Prevention Strategies:

Reinforce teaching on the importance of using the call bell during every patient encounter. Tell the patient, "never get out of bed without assistance."

Proactively address patient's needs with hourly rounding and ensure safety measures are in place.

Utilize bed alarms, chair alarms, and Posey alarm pads to alert staff when a patient is out of the bed.

Individualize patient teaching; educate the patient on their specific fall risk factors and the possibility of serious injury due to unsupervised ambulation.

Utilize floor mats at the bedside to reduce the severity of fall related injuries.

