

Community Services

Safe use of bed rails

This leaflet explains the use of bed rails in your care. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a member of our team who arranged your bed rail.

What are bed rails?

Bed rails attach to both sides of the bed. This is to help you stay safe while in bed. They're not used to stop you getting out of bed.

Bed rails help reduce your risk of slipping, sliding, falling, or rolling out of bed by accident. Bed rails are often used for this purpose, but they're not suitable for everyone and do have other risks.

Risks when using bed rails

Risks include:

- falling when trying to climb over bed rails
- injuring legs on bed rails
- injury caused by poorly fitted bed rails

Prescribing bed rails

A healthcare professional from our team will assess your risk before you are given a bed rail or alternative. This is to confirm that a bed rail is suitable.

We'll visit you to do this. We'll discuss the use of bed rails and the risks and benefits of them with you, and with your family or carer if appropriate.



Patient Information

We'll only prescribe and arrange bed rails if our risk assessment indicates it's safe to do so.

Your risk assessment must be reviewed:

- after any significant change in your health condition
- if you have any changes to the equipment that you use in or around your bed, such as when a pressure relieving mattress is added
- if you have any concerns about using bed rails or are finding them difficult to use
- if you have any accidents or “near misses” when using bed rails

It's important that you, or your family or carer, inform us if your needs have changed or you have concerns about using bed rails safely.

Alternatives to bed rails

Bed rails are not always suitable. We'll discuss alternative options with you, and your family or carer, if appropriate.

Some alternatives are:

- electric ultra-low beds that lower to near the floor, reducing risk of fall injuries
- fall mats placed beside the bed that reduce impact if you fall
- alarm systems to alert carers if you move from a normal position or want to get out of bed.

Patient Information

Using bed rails safely

All bed rails and equipment that we provide has been checked to make sure that it is safe and suitable. This includes equipment issued to you at home or during a hospital stay.

We provide bed rails that are compatible with your bed. Bed rails are carefully fitted to your bed to reduce any risks to you.

It's very important that:

- you use bed rails as we advise and you always follow manufacturer's guidelines
- the bed rails position is only altered or removed by a specialist technician
- bed rails are not used as an aid to help you move in bed. For example, you should not pull on the bed rails to sit up
- bed rails are not used to stop you intentionally getting out of bed
- both bed rails are in a raised position when you're in bed

Checking and maintenance

We review your use of bed rails every year. This review is to make sure bed rails remain safe and appropriate for you.

Arjo Huntleigh provide our bed rails. This is a company that also provides technicians to make sure bed rails remain in good condition.

It's important that you report faults with bed rails, and their other equipment, to Arjo Huntleigh as soon as possible. This includes "wear and tear" that can happen in-between maintenance visits.

You'll receive a manufacturer's user guide with contact information when you receive equipment.

Patient Information

User checks

Listed below are simple user checks that you can do to identify any problems.

- Are there any signs of damage, faults, or cracks on the bed rails?
- Are there any sharp edges that might cause injury?
- Do the bed rails feel loose or not secure?
- Have the bed rails moved since they were fitted?
- Are there any concerns about gaps in the equipment where parts of the body could get trapped?
- Is there any excessive movement when bed rails are raised?

If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, then you must contact Arjo Huntleigh. They’ll check the equipment and decide if it needs to be repaired or replaced.

Removal

Bed rails may become unsuitable if your health condition changes. We’ll discuss this with you if this happens. We’ll also discuss alternatives that may be suitable.

You can request removal if you’re unhappy with bed rails. We’ll explain the risks of not using bed rails, but we’ll arrange removal if you choose this.

Key Points

- If you have any questions or concerns about the use or safety of bed rails, please ask a staff member.
- The person delivering the bed rails will fit these to the bed and they must not be altered, adjusted or fitted to an alternative bed. Any moves or adjustment must be completed by Arjo Huntleigh.
- You and your family or carers should have access to the manufacturer’s instructions
- You or your family or carers, if applicable, must request a reassessment if there is any change in your weight, general size, condition or needs.

Patient Information

Contact details

- **Healthcare questions or concerns**

Please phone your community team on 0300 200 0011 and select the option for Community Nursing and Therapy Services.

- **Bed rail questions or concerns**

Please phone Arjo Huntleigh on 0345 734 2000

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please ask a member of our team and we will do our best to meet your needs.

Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This helps us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.

Scan the QR code to go to our I Want Great Care webpage and select the service you would like to give feedback about.



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