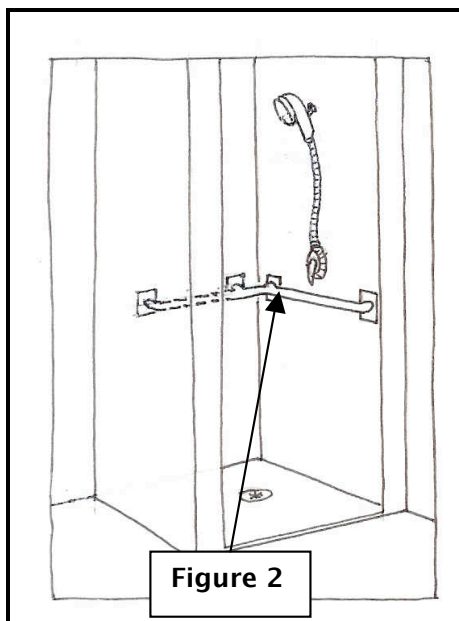


## INSTALLATION POSITIONS FOR WALL-MOUNTED GRAB RAILS FOR USE IN A SHOWER CUBICLE. Fig 2.



### WHERE CAN I PURCHASE A GRAB RAIL?

Grab rails can be purchased from:

- Disability equipment leaflets
- Hardware stores
- Home improvement stores
- Selected pharmacies

For your convenience phone ahead to be certain that the grab rail you are looking for is available.

Not medical advice: The information in this pamphlet is intended for educational purposes only. It is not, and should not be taken as advice or treatment from a doctor or health care professional. Never disregard professional, medical or healthcare advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this pamphlet.

*This pamphlet was produced by the Occupational Therapy Department at St Marks Day Hospital and was adapted from "Tools for Living Well" leaflets originally used as part of a Falls Prevention initiative in Canada*

Tel 01753 638524 – Review due 2010

# TIPS ON FALLS PREVENTION

*Prevent falls and maintain your independence*

*Installation of grab rails in the shower and by the bath*

### WHAT CAN A GRAB RAIL DO FOR YOU?

Using a grab rail can reduce your risk of falling or slipping in the bath or shower.

### WHO SHOULD USE GRAB RAILS?

Everyone! People of all ages and abilities can benefit from using grab rails.

### WHAT IS A GRAB RAIL?

A grab rail is an accessory that can be used in baths and showers to reduce the risk of falling and injuring yourself when taking a bath or shower. **Plastic, textured grab rails** are safest in the wet bathroom environment.

There are two types of grab rails to choose from: wall-mounted and portable.

### A wall-mounted grab rail can:

- Help you steady yourself while stepping into and out of the bath or shower.

Help you safely lower and raise yourself into and up from the bottom of the bath.

### Installation:

- We recommend that you hire a professional to install your wall mounted grab rail(s). The condition and structure of the wall can determine the position and type of rail.
- If you are qualified to install the grab rail(s) yourself, you **should carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions.**

### A portable grab rail can:

- Help you steady yourself while stepping into and out of the bath.
- Be installed on the bath rim with minimal effort,

Be removed, so that you can take it with you when you travel or move

### Installation:

- A portable grab rail can be installed by carefully following the instructions provided by the manufacturer.
- Regularly check your portable grab rail to ensure that it is secure and tightly screwed on to the bath rim.

**For your safety:** Portable grab rails are not designed to support your weight when sitting down in or getting up from the **bottom** of the bath.

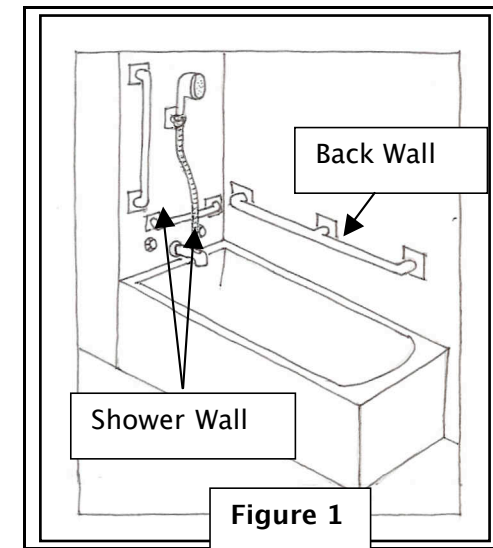
## HOW MANY GRAB RAILS DO I NEED, AND WHERE SHOULD THEY BE INSTALLED?

Because individual needs vary, you should talk to an occupational therapist (OT) to determine specifically where your grab rails would be most useful..

Research suggests that two grab rails in a bath or shower are useful for most older adults (see Figures 1 & 2):

- At least one along the shower wall, vertical or horizontal.
- One horizontal rail along the back wall.

## INSTALLATION TIPS FOR WALL-MOUNTED GRAB RAILS FOR USE WHEN BATHING. Fig 1



- Horizontal wall-mounted grab rails can be installed at a height of 18 to 28cm (7-11 inches) above the rim of the bath to assist lowering and raising yourself from the bath.
- For your safety: If a grab rail is horizontally mounted, it should have a wall clearance of approximately 4.5cm (1\_ inches) from the wall where the grab rail is mounted. This precaution will ensure that an individual won't catch his/her arm in the gap between the wall and the bar.
- Ceramic tiles may be a concern when installing grab rails, as they can crack. A professional should be able to install grab rails in your ceramic tiles without damaging them.