



Aging & Chronic Diseases

Fall risk and fall-related injuries

What should you measure to predict injurious falls?

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After discharge from hospital, older people are at risk of falling. Several risk factors for these falls and fall-related injuries have been identified. Some of these risk factors differ between men and women.

The Downton Fall Risk Index (DRFI) incorporates some of these risk factors to predict falls in the community, residential care and hospitals. The current study provides new insights into the DRFI and fall-related injuries.

No previous studies have evaluated the individual modules of the DFRI.

This study showed an increased risk of fall-related injuries if the patient had a risk for falls according to the DFRI, especially if they had previous falls and unsafe gait. Although there was similarity in results with many previous studies, these results could be further validated in future studies.

The results suggest that identifying patients at risk of injury is problematic and multi-faceted, and highlight the complexity of the area and the need for a broad, individualised assessment with an inter-disciplinary approach.

However, a fall-risk assessment should be conducted before discharge, focusing on previous falls and gait instability. In order to decrease the risk of fall-related injuries after discharge, the results of the assessments should then influence the level of care provided.

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