

Falls Among Older Adults in Oregon



Oregon Injury Prevention and Epidemiology Program Fact Sheet

BASIC FACTS

- Falls are a major health problem for adults 65 and older.
- About one third of falls are preventable— falls are not an inevitable part of aging.
- In 2006, over 5,500 Oregon seniors were hospitalized as the result of a fall at a cost of more than \$120 million.
- The fall death rate among Oregon seniors ≥ 65 years is 70% higher than the national rate.
- About 15% of seniors in Oregon reported falling in the previous 3 months.
- Group-based exercise such as tai chi may reduce risk of falls by as much as 55%.
- Screening seniors for falls in healthcare and social services can increase referral for assessment, and increase senior awareness and engagement in prevention.



Fatal Falls, 2006

Rate

- The rate of fatal falls among adults 65 and older in Oregon was 66 per 100,000 persons.
- The senior fatal fall rate in Oregon is 70% higher than the national rate.

Sex

- Men have a higher risk of fatal fall.
- Higher rates of fatal falls from steps, stairs, or ladders occur among men.
- Higher rates of fatal falls from tripping or stumbling occur among women.

Age

- The rate of fatal falls for those 85 and older is more than 18 times greater than for those 65-74.

Race

- The highest rate of fatal falls occurs among Caucasians— 67.3 per 100,000.

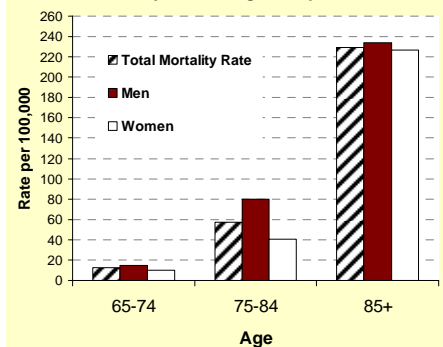
Risks

- Fall prevention should focus on addressing modifiable risk factors— strength, gait

and balance, vision, and psychoactive medications.

- An aging population, combined with increased life expectancy means fatal falls will likely increase in the future.

Fall Mortality Rate among Oregon Older Adults, by Sex and Age Group, 2006



Fall Hospitalization, 2006

Rate

- The rate of fall hospitalization in Oregon was 1, 193 per 100,000 seniors.

Sex

- Women are hospitalized more often than men.
- There were 1, 514 hospitalizations per 100,000 senior women in 2006, compared to 771 per 100,000 senior men.

Age

- Hospitalization increases

with age; those 85 and older are 8 times more likely to be hospitalized than those 65-74.

Risks and Outcomes

- Over 50% of fall hospitalizations involve hip fracture.
- 60% of Oregon seniors hospitalized for a fall are

discharged into long-term care— about 3,265 seniors a year.

Fall Hospitalization Rate among Oregon Older Adults, by Sex and Age Group, 2006

