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of Health Professions.

## Fall and Balance Center for Rehabilitation and Assessment

# Facts about Falling for Older Adults



### **Every Year**

300,000 older adults suffer fall-related hip fractures.

### **Every Week**

Nearly 200 Americans 65 and older die from fall-related injuries.

### **Every Day**

Over 400 older adults learn that they will never regain full mobility due to a hip fracture caused by a fall.

## Falling

- 13% of Michigan older adults reported falling within the past 3 months
- 28% reported falling in the previous year
- Most of the injuries were fractures
- Fatal falls were 25% greater for men compared to women
- Falling accounts for 80-95% of hip fractures in older adults
- Falls are reported to occur most often on porch steps



## Cost of Falling

- Falls that occurred to Michigan seniors in 2002 had estimated medical costs of \$657 million and total costs of about \$2.9 billion.
- In 2000, direct medical costs for hip fractures totaled \$179 million dollars for fatal and \$19 billion dollars for nonfatal fall injuries.

## Hospitalizations from Falling

- In 2004, falls caused 79% of hospitalizations for injury among Michigan residents aged 65 and older
- Adults over 75 who fall are 4 to 5 times more likely to be admitted to a nursing home for a year or longer
- 1/2 of all older adults hospitalized for hip fracture do not regain their former level of mobility; 20% die within a year
- Hip fractures lead a 5-20% reduction in life expectancy for seniors
- In 2001, 1.6 million older adults were treated in emergency departments for fall-related injuries.



## Fatal Falling

- Falls are the leading cause of injury deaths for older adults.
- An average of 345 older Michigan residents died each year from a fall between 1999 and 2002
- Between 1990 and 2004, the age-adjusted death rate due to elderly falls nearly doubled, from 20.2 to 38.3 per 100,000.

Given increasing fall death rates and a growing Michigan senior population there may be a substantial increase in the number of fall deaths in the absence of prevention. Prevention can work if evidence-based practices are applied. Research has proven that fall prevention programs that include fall risk assessments and medical follow-up reduced the risk of falling by 18 percent, and reduced the average number of falls sustained by 43 percent (RAND, 2002)

Sources: Comprehensive Fall Prevention for Community-Dwelling Older Adults, September 2005. Michigan Department of Community Health, Older Adult Falls in Michigan Brochure, 2006.



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