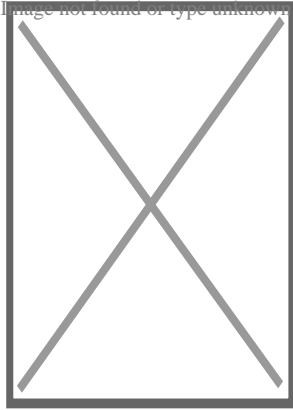


From the desk of Dr. Slandzicki – Fall Assessment

Description



As a physician I am sometimes asked by patients for advice on how to assess their parents or grandparents for fall risk. It is known that one out of 3 persons age 65 and older will fall each year. There are many readily available well accepted fall assessment tools. Fall risk assessment tools range from very straightforward to very detailed.

The fall assessment tool that I like to use is called “the get up and go test”. This is a very simple and straightforward test that can be done in a physician’s office or at home. It is a well accepted and validated test of basic functional mobility for elderly persons. The test involves 3 steps.

#1 Instruct patient to sit in a chair.

#2 Place a visible marker 8 feet away for the patient to walk around.

#3 Tell the patient to get up and walk quickly around the object, return to the chair and sit back down. Allow the patient to practice one time.

If the patient took longer than 8.5 seconds, he or she is considered at high risk for falls.

If it is determined that the patient is at high risk for falls, I would recommend evaluation by his or her physician to assess medications, balance, medical illnesses, strength, and cognitive function. Appropriate interventions such as referral to physical or occupational therapy, or a change in medications can then be implemented. Furthermore, the physician can recommend safety monitoring devices such as a medical alert system (PERS), canes or walkers, etc.

Category

1. Assistive Technology
2. Connected Caregiving
3. PERS

Date Created
July 9, 2010

default watermark