

# The Prevalence of Falls and Their Correlates Outside the Hospital in Chronic Pain Patients

## Schneck Medical Center Pain Center

### Study Highlights:

- Outpatient, chronic pain patients were reporting falls at their routine follow-up clinic visits. The research literature regarding falls primarily deals with the elder population in nursing homes and hospitals. The patients in our study reporting falls were a younger population with an average age of 49 years.
- Patients were asked to voluntarily participate in the study by completing a questionnaire at their scheduled clinic visit. They were asked if they experienced a fall within thirty days prior to their visit and the reason for the fall or falls.
- The study was conducted from 2/21/22 to 5/31/11.
- Each fall was assigned a single correlate.
- 671 patients participated in the study, 17 patients declined to participate.
- 182 patients reported 299 falls during the study period.
- The correlates were divided into environmental or patient perceived causes.
- Environmental correlates were 46%.
- Patient correlates were 54%.
- Three correlates were reported more frequently and accounted for 57% of the correlates: 1) “Legs gave out”; 2) “tripped over object”; 3) “loss of balance”.
- Many studies suggest that women fall more often than men. However, in our study 28% of the male patients fell, whereas, 26% of the women reported falls.
- We found that the patient’s health conditions were a more accurate predictor of falls than age or gender.
- These findings suggest the development of new nursing interventions for chronic pain patients in outpatient settings: 1) recording frequency of falls; 2) assessing for falls potential; 3) initiating measures that would include safety training in the home and surrounding, referrals to physical therapy for balance, gait training, and strengthening and reconditioning.
- Analysis of the data is continuing.
- The second phase of the study is in development for interventions for falls prevention in this population.

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