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Urgent Call for Action: Older Adults' Follow-Up Care and Fall Prevention Lags



Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries in the United States for adults ages 65 and older. **With 1 in 4 older adults falling annually, 27,000 deaths, 8 million emergency department (ED) visits, and 800,000 hospitalizations have occurred.**

A recent study conducted by Florida Atlantic University's Schmidt College of Medicine sheds light on the aftermath of fall-related head injuries among older adults, emphasizing critical gaps in healthcare.

Only 60% of individuals followed up with their primary care physician (PCP) after an emergency department (ED) visit. Although 72% received a fall assessment, only 56% adopted preventive strategies.

These findings underscore an urgent need to promote PCP follow-up and enhance the adoption of preventive measures, especially given the suboptimal rates observed.

Dr. Richard Shih, the senior author of the study, highlighted the inadequacy of current practices, stating, "We found that older patients treated in the emergency department for a fall-related head injury have suboptimal primary care physician follow-up and inadequate adoption of fall prevention strategies."

When referred to physical therapy, patients may be more likely to adopt fall prevention interventions and home safety modifications that have been shown to reduce recurrent fall, hospitalization and mortality."

Check out our weekly podcast hosted by Brian Harmon, PT, MBA and Jo Alch, RN with Joy Care Management.



A show on all things Senior Care with important topics and guests to help improve the health and quality of life of seniors.

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