Learning Objectives

MedBridge

Functional Cognition Part 2: Falls in the Elderly
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Course Objectives

- Summarize common cognitive issues related to aging and pathologies resulting in impaired cognition.
- Understand the clinical implications and imperative of treating patients at risk for falls
- Review the impact of cognitive changes on safety
- Review components of a cognitive screening and evaluation for the older adult.
- Summarize interventions on cognition in the older adult including Beck, Toglia, and Allen models of care for cognitive impairment
- Review elements of a home and community screening and evaluation to determine needs for an older adult who wants to remain in their home.
- Summarize resources available and assist an older adult with cognitive impairment who wants to remain in their home.
- Understand and integrate outcome research studies for screening, evaluation, and development of individual and group exercise programs.

Chapter 1: Falls in the Elderly: Cognitive Impact on Safety

- Understand how the environment plays a part in falling
- Appreciate the national statistics for falling in the older adult, and how as older adults age, chance of injury increases
- Understand what populations are most at risk for falling
- List the sequelae of falling in long-term care facilities
- Understand the basic mechanics of falling
- Understand the consequences of falling, at the body function/structure, activity, and participation levels of function

Chapter 2: Factors Related to Fall: Physical, Functional, Medical & Environment

- List the multifactorial causes of falling, as well as the intrinsic and extrinsic factors associated with falling
- Appreciate the multi-system contributions to falling, and how pathological changes can enhance fall risk
- Understand how alterations in the musculoskeletal and sensory systems can increase fall potential, and how weakness can be a predictor of falling
- Appreciate how disease impacts balance
• Understand the dietary factors impacting balance, including the role of hydration
• Understand the pharmacological influence on function and fall risk
• Understand the environmental factors that can heighten fall risk
• Understand the “best evidence” for fall intervention, both in the cognitively intact and impaired older adult
• Appreciate the importance of multi-factorial interventions linked with exercise and physical activity on mitigating fall risk
• List common screening tools for assessing the older adult for fall risk

Chapter 3: Cognitive Factors in Falls in the Elderly
• Appreciate how cognition is the “missing link” in understanding fall risk
• List the general components of cognition
• Understand the concept of higher cognitive function and how the various domains of cognition help older adults anticipate and avoid falling
• List the different levels of awareness and how safety is impacted
• Understand the rehabilitation implications associated with a lack of awareness and fall risk, and the role of compensatory strategies to decrease fall risk