

FALLING and the INDIVIDUAL WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Panelists:

Jan F. Bell

**Nancy Glenmore
Tatum**

**Kevin P. Walsh, DC
CCP**

MODERATED BY:

E. Ayn Welleford, PhD - Virginia Commonwealth University

FALLS

- **35% to 40% of generally healthy older persons over the age 65 fall annually; incidences rates increase 3 fold for those persons in need of assisted living services**
- **Unintentional injuries are the 5th leading cause of death in older adults**
- **75% of unintentional deaths were the result of falls**
- **90 percent of the 300,000 hip fractures treated annually in the U.S. occur as a result of a fall.**
- **Approximately 25 percent of hip fracture patients will make a full recovery; 40 percent will require nursing home admission; 50 percent will be dependent upon a cane or a walker; and 20 percent will die in one year.**
- **The National Osteoporosis Foundation reports 35,700 deaths each year from complications from hip fractures as a result of osteoporosis.**

IDENTIFYING RISK FACTORS

- **Physical**

(age, vision, arthritis, bone/muscle weakness, imbalance, cardiac arrhythmias, blood pressure fluctuation, etc.)

- **Chemical**

(side effects of medicine)

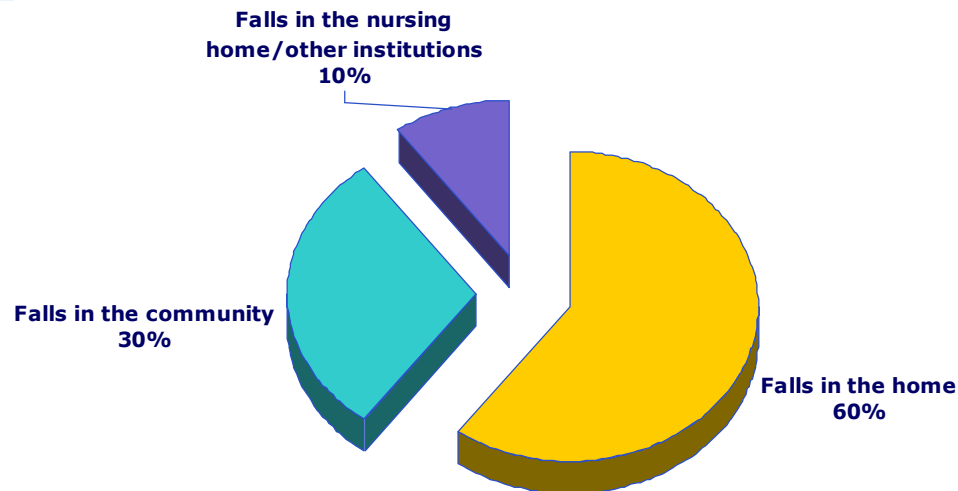
- **Environmental**

(clutter, stairs, absence of light, etc.)

PREVENTION

- **Physical**
 - ✓ Strength/Balance/Flexibility
 - ✓ Proactive Steps
 - ✓ Assistive Devices
- **Chemical**
 - ✓ Become Informed
 - ✓ Keep Informed
 - ✓ Discuss Alternatives
- **Environmental**
 - ✓ Clear a Path
 - ✓ Keep Up with Maintenance
 - ✓ Additions

RISK FACTORS IN THE HOME



- Approximately 25 percent of all falls are the result of hazards such as slippery or wet surfaces, poor lighting, inadequate footwear and cluttered pathways in a home.
- Most fractures are a result of a fall in a home, usually related to everyday activities such as walking on stairs, going to the bathroom or working in the kitchen.

PREVENTION IN HOMES

- **Stairs** (light, clutter-free, non-slip treads, handrails)
- **Bathroom** (night light, non-skid backing for rugs, handrails, unlocked door)
- **Kitchen** (counter-level storage, clean areas – spill free)
- **Living Room** (open pathways, cords out of the pathway, de-clutter).
- **Bedroom** (cords out of the pathway, nightlight)
- **Footwear** (no heels/non-skid soles, no laces)

RESOURCES

http://www.stopfalls.org/researchers_educators/re_mm.shtml