

Abstract

Original Article

Determining Patients' Risk of Falling in the Emergency Department

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Abstract

Objectives: This study was conducted with the aim of determining the risk of falling in patients admitted to the emergency department, and was a descriptive and cross-sectional study.

Method: The study was conducted in the emergency department at a university hospital in Izmir Turkey. The sample consisted of the 752 patients who were admitted to the emergency department and who accepted to take part in the research. Data, which consisted of patients' socio-demographic characteristics and falling characteristics, was collected using an Individual Characteristics Form, the Falling Risk Assessment Scale devised by the Delmarva Foundation. Statistical evaluation of data was performed with the use of numerical and percentage values, the chi-square test and Kruskal-Wallis variance analysis.

Results: It was found that 37% of the patients taking part in the study were in the over-65-year age group; 52% were male and 59.4% had a chronic illness. It was established that 30.3% of the patients had a high risk of falling according to the Delmarva Foundation Scale (10 points or more). A statistically significant difference was found between the level of risk of falling and the patients' age, state of chronic illness, the unit of the emergency department where they were, and the reason for their admission to the emergency department ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: A significant proportion of patients who are admitted to the emergency department are at risk of falling. In particular, patients' risk of falling is affected by individual characteristics, their state of chronic illness, the unit of the emergency department where they are, and the reason for their admittance to the emergency department.

Keywords: Emergency department; falls; fall risk evaluation; fall risk factors; patient safety.