

Spine West Physicians:

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Other News:

➤ We bought a new, more powerful Ultrasound Machine that allows us to see soft tissues like muscle and tendon tears, nerves, fluid pockets, lumps and bumps with finer detail. It also has a Doppler feature that allows us to see blood flow patterns in tissue. We are very excited about this new, completely safe tool to help diagnose various musculoskeletal ailments.

➤ A recent European study of over 350,000 patients found abdominal body fat significantly increased risk or death. If you carry weight around your middle, it may be time to shrink it.

➤ We have had good success with injecting your own growth factors spun out of your blood in lieu of corticosteroids into painful muscles and tendons. The procedure is called "Platelet Rich Plasma" injections (aka PRP). We have the specialized centrifuge in our office. Ask us for details.

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Newsletters@SpineWest.com



The High Risks of Falling

- 1 in 3 adults 65 years and older falls each year, making this a leading cause of injury and death.
- In 2005, 15,800 people 65 years and older died from injuries related to unintentional falls.
- In 2005, about 1.8 million were treated in hospital emergency departments and more than 400,000 of these patients were hospitalized.
- Hip fractures are the most common injury and are major determinants for functional decline.
- One in four seniors who breaks a hip stays in a nursing home for at least a year after the injury. 1 in 5 hip fracture patients dies within that time.
- Those who are not seriously hurt often develop a fear of falling, which may lead to activity limitations and decrease their independence.
- As physical fitness and mobility decrease, the risk of falling increases.

Stability and fall prevention have a high priority for maintaining health and independence.

Maintaining Health and Independence

- The cause of falls is usually multifactorial and often preventable for "seasoned individuals":
- Reviewing medications and their side effects, especially those that lower low blood pressure or cause dizziness, can decrease the risk of falling. Even over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol PM may be a risk.
- In your home, be alert to environmental hazards such as throw rugs, cords, pets, clutter, poor lighting, and poorly placed furniture. Well placed furniture and grab bars in high-risk areas can help.
- Improve lighting for those night time bathroom runs.
- Non-slip shoes and slippers may be helpful.
- Avoid wearing bifocals while walking as they can alter the visual acuity.
- Outside the home, stability aids that provide a larger "base of support" such as a cane or walker may make the difference between independent living and hospitalization.
- Proper nutrition including adequate vitamin D and calcium intake.
- Osteoporosis assessment and treatment has been proven to decrease hip fractures.
- Assess for decreased nerve function in your legs and feet.
- And properly instructed exercise and balance training may help improve gait, balance, muscle strength and reaction times.



If you or a loved one has any questions or want to learn more about items discussed in this issue, please come see us.