

Fall prevention in community-dwelling older persons

Falls among older people are a serious public concern due to the presence of aging populations worldwide. We have been establishing community-based fall prevention programs for older persons in a Japanese city for more than 10 years. At first, we introduced two programs to 24 senior centers and conducted a prospective controlled trial. A total of 185 participants received a single-visit program consisting of one multidisciplinary team visit that included fall risk assessment with feedback and a fall prevention lecture. A total of 418 participants received a year-round comprehensive program, with visits conducted every 3 months. We compared the fall rates for 1 year between the two programs. The fall rates did not differ significantly between the programs. Instead, a 43% reduction in the fall rate was observed in both programs. Thereafter, we implemented a modified version of the single-visit program for 9 years and found that the risk of falling (fall rates in the preceding year) decreased significantly as the number of program attendances increased. The programs, which included fall risk assessment with feedback and a fall prevention lecture, reduced the incidence of falls in the community-dwelling older persons and were accepted well over the course of 10 years.