

Physical activity level among elderly chileans who have suffered falls

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Abstract

Background: Falls among older adults are associated with important changes in lifestyle. However, there is no evidence about the physical activity levels of older adults who have experienced falls. The aim of this study, therefore, was to describe physical activity levels in older adults who have experienced falls in the last 12 months. Methods: 1,254 older adults (aged ≥ 60 years) from the National Health Survey 2009-2010 were included in this study. Number of falls during the last 12 months was self-reported and physical activity was measured using the Global Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPAQ). The association between falls and physical activity was investigated using regression analyses. Results: 70.5% [95% CI: 68.0; 72.8] of the older adults included in this study did not report any falls during the last 12 months. However, 19.4% [95% CI: 17.4; 21.5] reported 1-2 falls and 10% [95% CI: 8.4; 11.8] reported ≥ 3 falls in the last 12 months. In comparison to those who reported no falls, those who experienced ≥ 3 falls in the last 12 months did 79.2 fewer minutes/day of physical activity. Similar results were found for moderate and transport-related physical activity, but no associations were found for vigorous or sedentary behaviours. Conclusion: Older adults who suffered falls in the last 12 months reported doing less physical activity than their counterparts who did not experience any falls. In the middle and long term, these changes in physical activity could contribute to adverse health outcomes in an already frail population. © 2021, Sociedad Chilena de Nutricion Bromatologia y Toxilogica. All rights reserved.

Author keywords

Aged; Ageing; Exercise; Falls; Public health