

Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

Posted on December 30, 2009 by [Jonathan Rosenfeld](#)

Falls In Nursing Homes Are A Serious Threat To The Safety Of Many Patients



Given the frequency (approximately 80+% of all nursing nursing home patients will experience a fall this coming year) with which nursing home falls occur, facilities must be on the lookout when it comes to implementing fall prevention techniques in order to improve patient safety. Too often, the prevention comes too late-- if at all.

Here are our most popular fall-related entries over the past year:

How Many Falls Is Enough To Impose Responsibility On Nursing Home?

Falls are a common problem facing elderly people in and out of nursing homes. By some accounts, every elderly person in America will fall at least one time over the course of the next year. Many of these falls will cause injury and some will even cause death.

In the case of falls occurring in the nursing home setting, many clients and their families focus their attention on tying a specific number of falls to a facilities responsibility. Truth be told, there really is no magic number when it comes to identifying a specific number of falls after which a nursing home or hospital becomes responsible....

Never Event #1: Hospital Falls & Trauma

Falls in trauma top the list of preventable medical conditions in hospitals, accounting for 193,566 incidents in 2007. Falls in hospitals (and similarly in nursing homes) are deemed to be preventable by Medicare because with proper fall/risk assessments and staff assistance most falls in hospital could be avoided. A number of factors should be addressed by a hospital to determine if a person is at risk for falls:...

[Nursing Home Cited For Mistreatment Of Resident Following Investigation Of Resident's Fractured Neck](#)

The Minnesota Department of Health released an investigative report concluding a resident of Presbyterian Homes of Arden Hills Nursing Home sustained a broken neck due to a fall or other trauma at the facility. The investigation follows the death of 91-year-old Gladys Gall, a resident at the facility. Despite the fact no federal or state nursing home violations were identified, investigators still determined there was ample circumstantial evidence to conclude the nursing home was at fault in the injury and subsequent death of Gall. On April 18, 2008 Gall was admitted to an emergency room after complaining of head and neck pain. A CT scan confirmed Gall's pain was related to a cervical fracture. On April 28th, Gall died from complications related to the cervical fracture....

[What Is Hypostatic Blood Pressure & Why Is There An Associated 'Fall Risk'?](#)

Hypotension (low blood pressure) is a problem for many nursing home residents, causing dizziness and fainting. Blood pressure readings measure the pressure in arteries - systolic pressure (the top number in a reading) measures the pressure the heart generates when pumping blood out to the rest of the body and diastolic pressure (the bottom number in a reading) measures the amount of pressure between heartbeats. A systolic blood pressure of 90 millimeters of mercury or less or a diastolic blood pressure of 60 millimeters of mercury or less is considered low....

[Nursing Home Staff Must Take Precautions While Moving & Transferring Disabled Patients To Minimize Risk Of Dropping](#)

The most dangerous part of the day for many nursing home patients may be getting out of bed in the morning. When staff fail to supervise or provide proper assistance to nursing home patients during transfers, patients are at risk for falls or being dropped by staff.

Disabled nursing home patients and those with physical limitations must be carefully monitored to avoid injuries while being transferred from one device to another. Some of the commonly encountered situations where patients are injured include:...

[Even Common Falls Put Elderly At Risk For Developing Subdural Hematomas](#)

Frequently undiagnosed and under-appreciated, falls amongst the elderly can frequently result in brain bleeds or technically termed 'subdural hamatoas'. Because elderly are predisposed to developing subdural hamatomas, staff in nursing homes and hospitals need to be tuned into the symptoms and when to seek additional medical care....

Bone Fractures In The Elderly Require Special Attention To Improve Recovery & Prevent Complications

A fracture is a broken bone that requires medical attention. Fifty percent of women over age fifty and twenty-five percent of men over age fifty will suffer from an age-related bone fracture sometime in their lifetime.

Elderly people are particularly susceptible to broken bones because as bones age, they lose the ability to resist the formation and growth of cracks that can lead to bone breaks because they cannot withstand as much pressure as younger bones. Unfortunately, as we age, our bodies ability to heal fractures is compromised....

Blood Thinning Medications, Such As Coumadin, Pose Substantial Danger To Nursing Home Patients Involved In Falls

Coumadin (generic name - Warfarin), is an anticoagulant (blood thinning medication) that is commonly used to help treat and prevent blood clots that could cause a heart attack, stroke, or pulmonary embolism. This prescription medication works by blocking the creation of certain clotting mechanisms, which prevents blood clots from forming. The goal of warfarin therapy is to decrease the clotting tendency of blood but not to prevent clotting altogether....

If your loved one suffered an injury related to a fall at a hospital or nursing home, the facility may be responsible for their injuries. You can always call our office to discuss the potential matter, free of charge. Toll-free across the country (888) 424-5757

Tags: [Nursing Home Falls](#), [coumadin](#), [death](#), [dropping patients](#), [fractures](#), [hospital falls](#), [multiple falls](#), [subdural hematoma](#), [transferring patients](#)