

FEAR of FALLING

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You may have osteoporosis or you may have compromised function, regardless, you or someone you know has a fear of falling.

Osteoporosis means “porous bone.” Under a microscope, bone looks like a honeycomb. With Osteoporosis, the holes and spaces in the honeycomb are much larger. This means the bone has lost density or mass. As bone becomes less dense it becomes weaker. Ten million Americans are estimated to have Osteoporosis. Twenty percent affected by Osteoporosis are men. This bone condition places you at greater risk for a broken bone (fracture) and falls are the most common reason for a fracture.

Falls in older adults are common. More than one-third of older adults living in the community will fall at least once a year. In addition to broken bones, falling may result in cuts, head injuries, concussions and visits to the emergency department or hospital. Many older adults stop going out and doing things they enjoy because they are worried about falling and getting hurt.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) current recommendations for preventing falls include exercise or physical therapy and Vitamin D supplementation to prevent falls in community dwelling adults aged 65 or older who are at increased risk for falling. Community dwelling adults means that you do not live in an assisted living facility or a nursing home. The USPSTF vitamin D recommendation is 600ui for adults aged 51 to 70 years and 800ui for adults older than 70 years.

Regardless of age let us help you prevent a fall. In-depth multifactorial risk assessment offers small benefit to identify your risk of falling. A history of falls, a history of mobility problems and poor performance on the timed Get up and Go test is sufficient to determine your risk of falling. **At Lake Country Physical Therapy and SportsCare, PC our routine assessment includes all that is mentioned as being sufficient in determining your risk of falling.** Your examination will include testing motion, strength, endurance, balance and walking. We will verify appropriate vision testing and treatment has taken place. Your blood pressure will be checked after standing up. A review of your medications is important as some medications may be causing your falls. We will review the supplements you are taking and verify you are taking sufficient Calcium and vitamin D. Some people may benefit from protein supplements.

Once your risk factors are identified, **your treatment plan is customized** to address each and every factor placing you at risk and creating your fear of falling. At first your treatment will include managing any pain and mobility restrictions. As your pain reduces and your mobility improves your walking, balance and coordination challenges will be addressed in addition to any functional limitations like getting out of a chair, stair climbing, squatting to lift or pick up an object from the floor. We also discuss with you and assist you in eliminating hazards in your home that place you at increased risk for falling. **Our primary goal is to teach you what you can do to prevent falls and to reduce or eliminate your concerns about of falling.**

For more information about Lake Country Physical Therapy and Sportscare, PC, please call (585) 396-1400, email Zoe@lakecountrypt.com, Robert @lakecountrypt.com or visit us at www.lakecountrypt.com.