Incidence and risk factors of falls among the elderly in the district of Colombo.

Ranaweera AD[1], Fonseka P, PattiyaArachchi A, Siribaddana SH.

Abstract

OBJECTIVES:

To assess the incidence and risk factors of falls among the elderly in the District of Colombo.

METHODS:

Incidence of falls was assessed by a community based descriptive study with prospective follow up. Risk factors for falls were assessed by a nested case control study. Participants above 65 years residing in 40 Grama Niladhari Divisions in the Colombo district (n=1200) were assessed for falls and followed up for four months. Those who had falls were selected as cases (n=151), while two controls per case were selected from others.

MEASUREMENTS:

Tests for gait problems, disability, cognitive impairment and vision.

RESULTS:

The incidence rate of falls was 492 per 1000 person years (95% CI 448-536). Risk factors for falls identified in the multivariate analysis were falls in the previous year (OR 4.67), high disability level (OR 2.04) and high house risk level (OR 1.68).

CONCLUSIONS:

The high incidence of falls among the elderly reported in this study and the preventable risk factors identify / indicate the necessity and feasibility of their prevention.