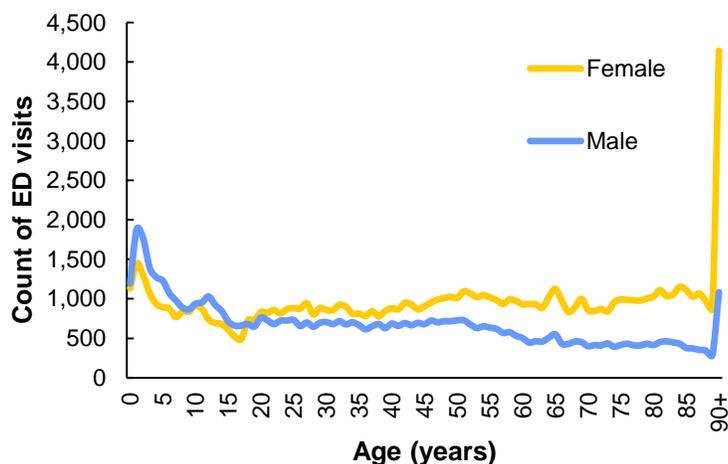


NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS FOR INJURIES DUE TO FALLS

The North Carolina Disease Event Tracking and Epidemiologic Collection tool (NC DETECT) provides public health officials and hospital users with the capacity for statewide early event detection and timely public health surveillance. Through NC DETECT, users can access near real-time data from North Carolina acute care emergency departments (EDs), the Carolinas Poison Center (CPC), and the Pre-Hospital Medical Information System (PreMIS). NC DETECT data from ED visits have become increasingly important for the surveillance of injury morbidity in North Carolina. NC DETECT is funded by the NC Division of Public Health (NC DPH). This document summarizes 2012 ED visits with an external cause of injury code (E-code) for an unintentional fall.

North Carolina ED visits due to falls, 2012



- In 2012, there were 148,351 ED visits with E-codes for unintentional falls across all age groups. Among the 1,118,434 ED visits due to injury, over 13% were due to falls.

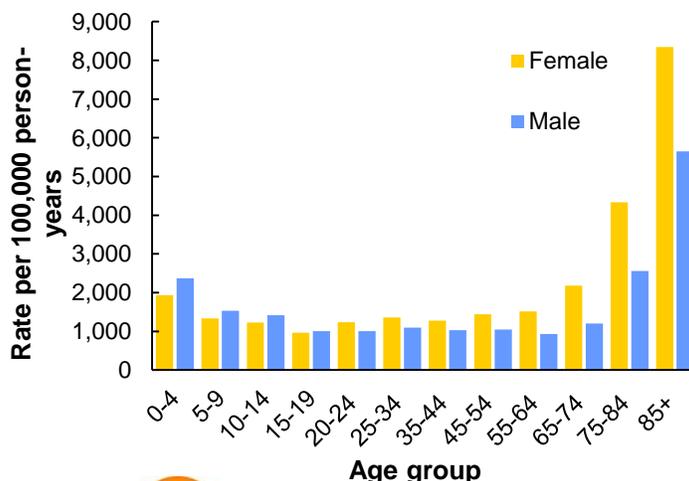
- In 2012, there were 1,521 NC ED visits due to falls per 100,000 person-years.

- The 2012 rate was similar to the previous two years. In 2010 there were 1,516 visits per 100,000 person-years and in 2011 there were 1,548 visits per 100,000 person-years due to falls.

- There were more injuries due to falls among women (86,881 ED visits) than men (61,464 ED visits).

Rates of North Carolina ED visits due to falls, 2012

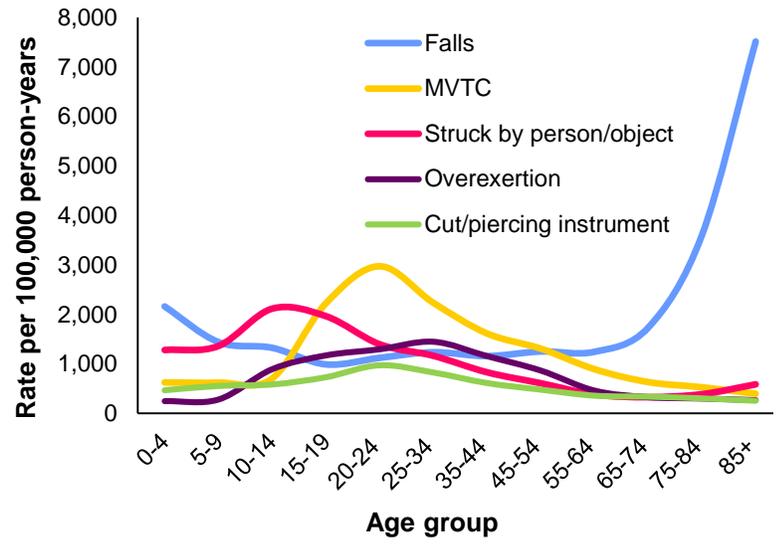
- Overall, rates of ED visits for falls were higher among women (1,738 visits per 100,000 person-years) than among men (1,293 visits per 100,000 person-years).
- Rates of ED visits due to falls peaked at 85+ years of age for both women (8,349 visits per 100,000 person-years) and men (5,654 visits per 100,000 person-years).
- Young men and boys 0-19 years of age had higher rates of injuries due to falls than women. For all other age groups, women had higher rates of falls than men.



Source: Carolina Center for Health Informatics, Department of Emergency Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2014.
 NC Division of Public Health / www.publichealth.nc.gov / Injury Epidemiology & Surveillance Unit/ 919-707-5425
 NC Disease Event Tracking and Epidemiologic Collection Tool (NC DETECT) / www.ncdetect.org / 919-843-2361
 State of North Carolina / Department of Health and Human Services / www.ncdhhs.gov
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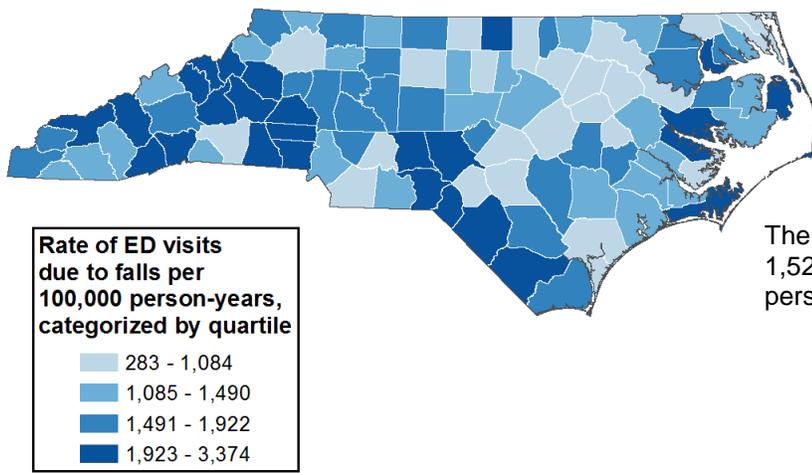
Leading causes of unintentional injuries, 2012

- Across all injury mechanisms, falls were the most common reason for visiting a NC ED in 2012.
- Among seniors, falls were the most common injury mechanism by far. For seniors 85 years of age and older, the rate of ED visits due to falls was nearly 13 times the rate of the next highest injury mechanism (ED visits due to being struck by a person or object).
- The NC counties with the highest rates of ED visits due to falls (visits per 100,000 person-years in parentheses) were Avery (3,374), Mitchell (3,332), McDowell (3,129), Cleveland (2,776), and Burke counties (2,749).



Abbreviations: MVTC, motor vehicle traffic crash

Population-based rates of ED visits due to falls by North Carolina county, 2012



The 2012 rate for NC was 1,521 ED visits per 100,000 person-years.

Prevention Strategies

- Engage in regular physical activity to help maintain muscle tone and prevent loss of balance.
- Have your medications reviewed by a pharmacist to identify any interactions that could increase your risk for a fall.
- Assess your home for falls hazards (such as tripping hazards, inadequate lighting, uneven surfaces, etc.).

For more information on preventing injuries due to falls please visit the NC Injury and Violence Prevention Branch website at www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov or visit www.injuryfreenc.org.



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