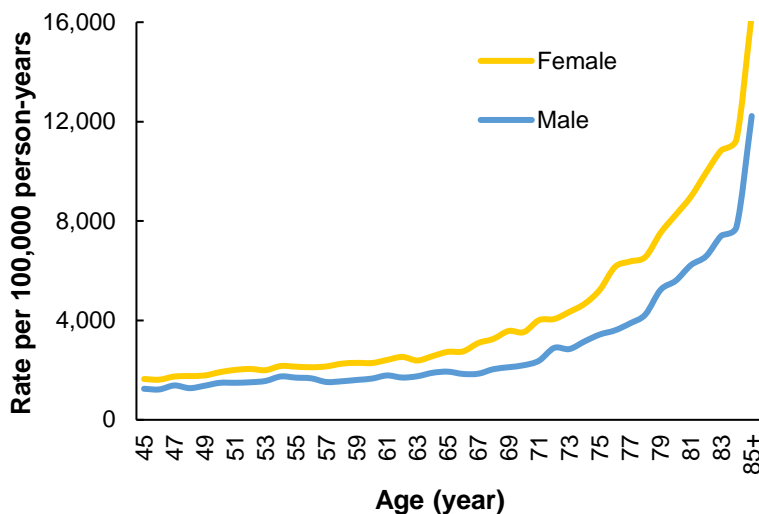


NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS FOR INJURIES DUE TO FALLS AMONG ADULTS ≥ 45 YEARS OF AGE

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 state poison control center, and the statewide EMS data system. 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 2017 ED visits with an ICD-10-CM code for an unintentional fall among adults ≥ 45 years of age.*

Rates of North Carolina ED visits due to falls among adults ≥ 45 years of age, 2017



Missing: 97 visits missing sex or age.

Severity of falls among adults ≥ 45 years of age, 2017

- Overall, 42% of adults ≥ 45 years of age arrived at the ED via ambulance with a falls-related injury.
- The percent of individuals who arrived via ambulance varied by age group. For example, over 63% of individuals ≥ 85 years of age arrived at the ED via ambulance.
- Disposition also varied by age group. Overall, 14% of adults ≥ 45 years of age were admitted to a hospital or transferred to another hospital; however, 20% of individuals ≥ 85 years of age with a falls-related injury were admitted to the hospital.

* An unintentional fall is defined following the case definition laid out on ncdetect.org. For questions about the methods used to generate this fact sheet, please email ncdetect@listserv.med.unc.edu.

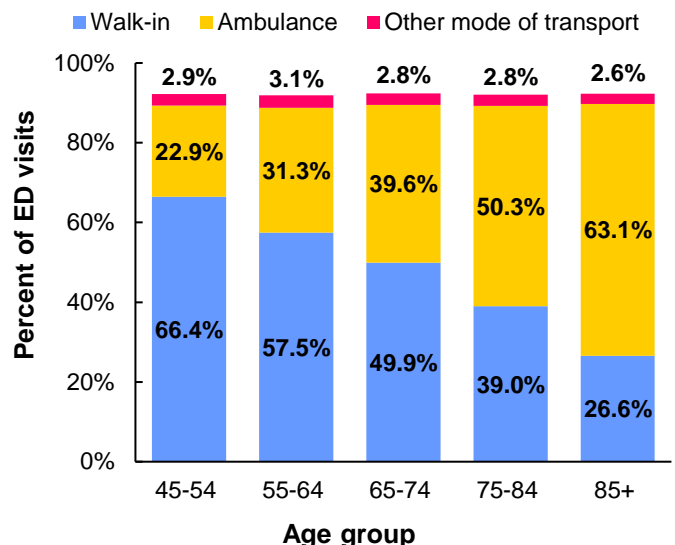
- In 2017, there were 136,209 ED visits with E-codes for unintentional falls among adults ≥ 45 years of age. Among the 422,104 ED visits due to injury in this age group, 33% were due to falls.

- In 2017, there were 3,140 NC ED visits due to falls per 100,000 person-years for individuals aged 45+.

- Counts were higher among women (88,307 visits) than among men (47,775 visits).

- Rates were also higher among women (3,800 visits per 100,000 person-years) than among men (2,372 visits per 100,000 person-years).

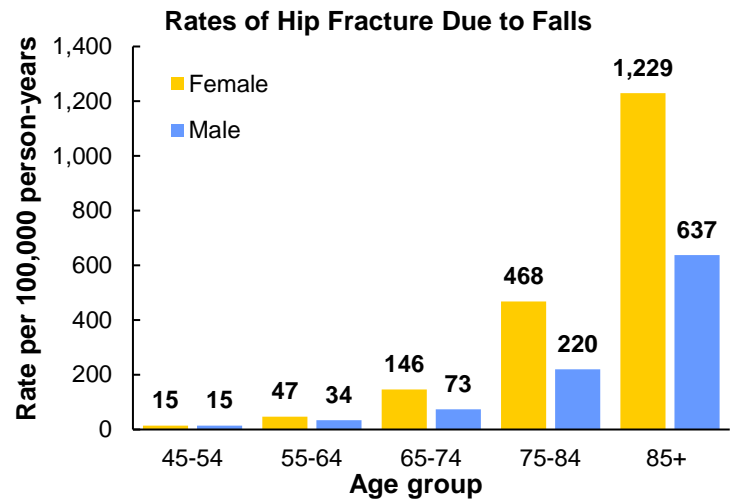
ED Arrival Transportation Mode for Falls



Missing: 10,681 visits missing age or mode of transport.

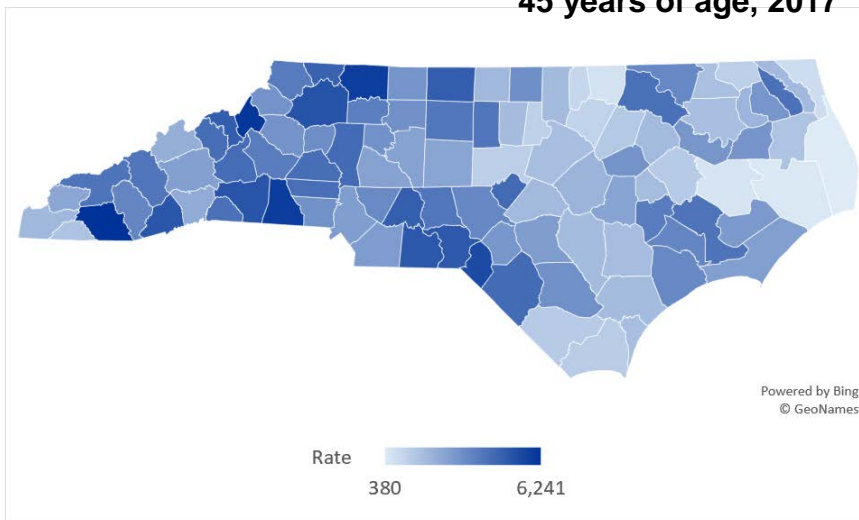
Rates of hip fractures due to falls among adults \geq 45 years of age, 2017

- Falls are a common cause of hip fractures among older adults. For this population, the number of visits due to hip fractures was 5,271 visits with a rate of 121.5 ED visits per 100,000 person-years.
- Rates of falls-related hip fractures were over twice as high among women (168 visits per 100,000 person-years) than among men (73 visits per 100,000 person-years).



Missing: <10 visits missing sex or age.

Population-based rates of ED visits due to falls by North Carolina county among adults \geq 45 years of age, 2017



- The 2017 rate for NC was 3,140 ED visits per 100,000 person-years for individuals 45 years of age or older.
- The NC counties with the highest rates of ED visits due to falls among adults \geq 45 years of age (visits per 100,000 person-years in parentheses) were Macon (6,241), Avery (6,096), Cleveland (5,917), Surry (5,882), and Scotland counties (5,470).

Prevention strategies

- Engage in regular physical activity to help maintain muscle tone and prevent loss of balance. Tai chi is one form of exercise that is useful for falls prevention.
- Have your medications reviewed by a pharmacist to identify any interactions that could increase your risk of a fall.
- Speak with your doctor about falls prevention and identify health conditions, such as vision problems or osteoporosis, which may put you at an increased risk for a fall-related injury.
- 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.



Source: Carolina Center for Health Informatics, Department of Emergency Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2015.
 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
 NC DHHS is an equal opportunity employer and provider.