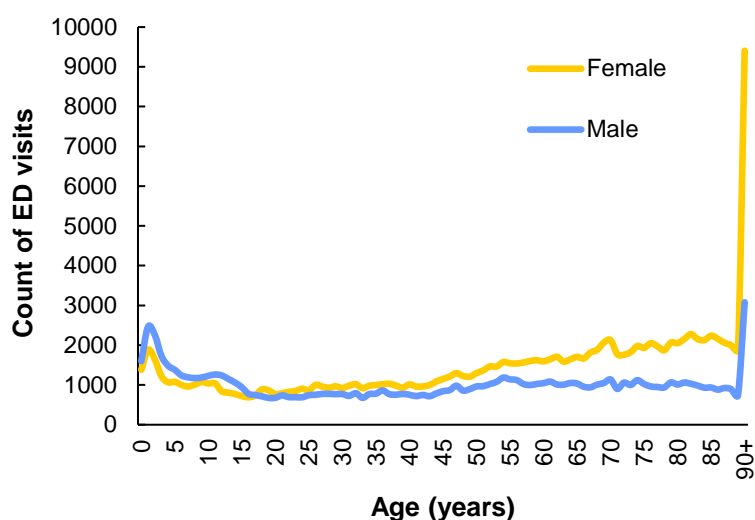


NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS WITH A DIAGNOSIS OF AN UNINTENTIONAL FALL, 2017

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 unintentional fall as defined under the NC DETECT case definition found at ncdetect.org.*

North Carolina ED visits due to falls, 2017



- In 2017, there were 224,848 ED visits with ICD-10-CM codes for unintentional falls across all age groups. Among the 943,929 ED visits due to injury, nearly one-fourth were due to falls.

- In 2017, there were 2,189 NC ED visits due to falls per 100,000 person-years.

- There were more ED visits due to falls among women (132,683 ED visits) than men (91,972 ED visits).

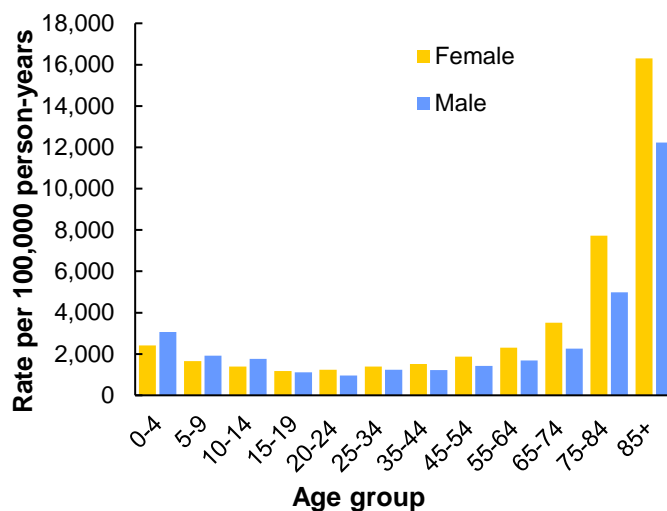
- White females had the greatest rate of falls (2,709 per 100,000 person-years), followed by American Indian females (1,874 per 100,000 person-years).

Rates of North Carolina ED visits due to falls, 2017

- Overall, rates of ED visits for falls were higher among women (2,380 visits per 100,000 person-years) than among men (1,866 visits per 100,000 person-years).

- Rates of ED visits due to falls peaked at 85+ years of age for both women (16,303 visits per 100,000 person-years) and men (12,224 visits per 100,000 person-years).

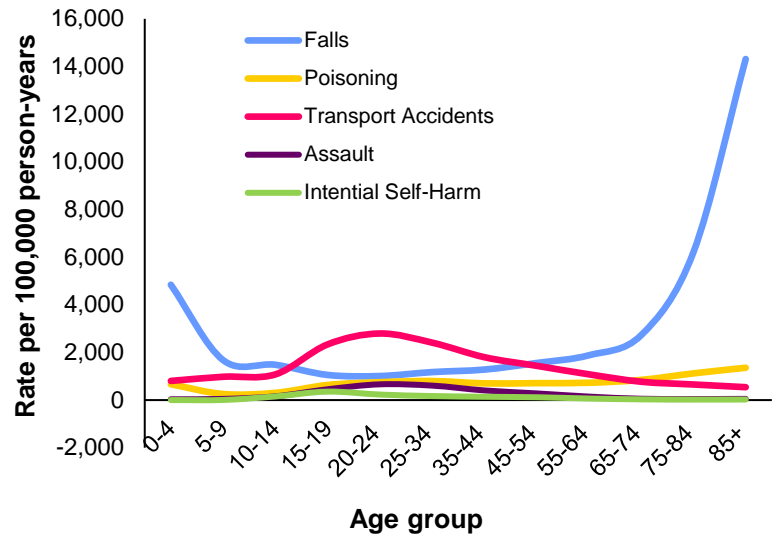
- Young men and boys 0-15 years of age had higher rates of injuries due to falls than women. For all other age groups, women had higher rates of falls than men.



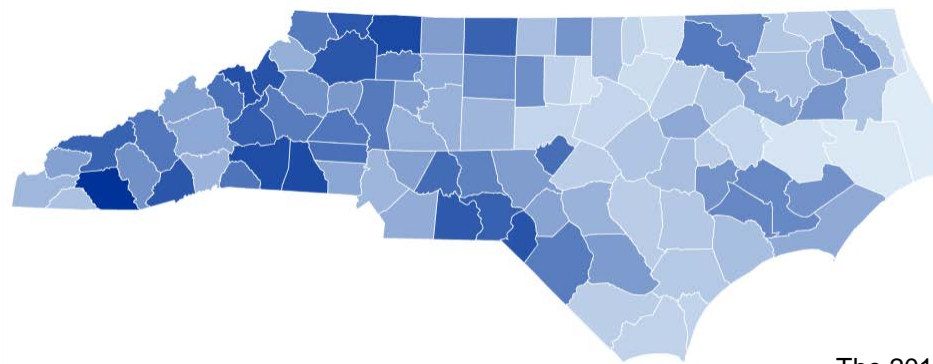
*An unintentional fall is defined following the case definition laid out on ncdetect.org. For questions about the methods used to generate this fact sheet, please email ncdetect@listserv.med.unc.edu.

Leading causes of unintentional injuries, 2017

- Across all injury mechanisms, falls were the most common reason for visiting a NC ED in 2017.
- Among young children and older adults, falls were the most common injury mechanism. For adults 85 years of age and older, the rate of ED visits due to falls was nearly 11 times the rate of the next highest injury mechanism (ED visits due to poisoning).
- The NC counties with the highest rates of ED visits due to falls (visits per 100,000 person-years in parentheses) were Macon (5,303), Surry (4,717), Cleveland (4,648), Rutherford (4,610), and Mitchell (4,511) counties.



Population-based rates of ED visits due to falls by North Carolina county, 2017



Rate per 100,000 person-years
355 5303

The 2017 rate for NC was 2,189 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.



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
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