

Study finds increase in fall-related traumatic brain injuries among elderly men and women

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"Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a major cause of hospitalization, disability, and death-worldwide, and among older adults, falling is the most common cause of TBI," writes Niina Korhonen, B.M., of the Injury and Osteoporosis Research Center, Tampere, Finland, and colleagues in a Research Letter. The authors previously reported that the number and incidence of adults 80 years of age or older admitted to the hospital due to fall-induced TBI in Finland increased from 1970 through 1999. This analysis is a follow-up of this population through 2011.

The study included data from the Finnish National [Hospital Discharge](#) Register, a nationwide, computer-based register that provides data for severe injuries among the Finnish population. The researchers found that the total number of older Finnish adults with a fall-induced TBI increased considerably from 60 women and 25 men in 1970 to 1,205 women and 612 men in 2011. The age-adjusted incidence of TBI (per 100,000 persons) also showed an increase from 168.2 women in 1970 to 653.6 in 2011 (an increase of 289 percent) and from 174.6 to 724.0, respectively, in men (an increase of 315 percent).

"Our 40-year follow-up shows that the number and age-adjusted incidence of fall-induced TBI in Finnish men and women aged 80 years or older increased considerably between 1970 and 2011. Compared with the data in our previous study, the increase has continued since 1999," the authors write. "Further studies are needed to better understand the reasons for the increase in fall-related TBI in older persons (aged >80 years) so that effective interventions for falls and [injury prevention](#) can be initiated."

More information: *JAMA*. 2013;309[18]:1891-1892.

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