



Enfield Health & Wellness Center

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Your Therapy Team

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Auto Injuries
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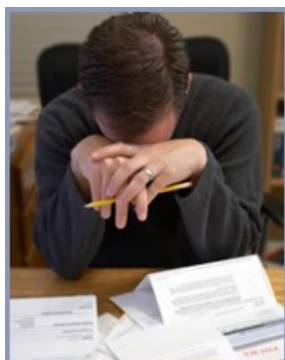
Physical Therapy Helps Fall Risk with Osteoarthritis of the Knee

Fall risk increases dramatically with age, and fall-related mortality is on the rise in the U.S.¹ Fall-injury costs have been estimated to reach as high as 1.5% of total healthcare expenditures.² It is well-established that strengthening and balance training can moderate fall risk among certain patients.^{3,4} However, the extent to which osteoarthritis of the knee can interfere with fall-prevention rehab is a subject of ongoing research. There is evidence that osteoarthritis of the knee independently contributes to fall risk.⁵ The pain of osteoarthritis is believed to interfere with muscle strength and proprioception. Earlier this year, *Age and Ageing* published the first systematic review and meta-analysis evaluating the effects of physical therapy on fall risk in osteoarthritis of the knee.⁶



Researchers included 15 randomized, controlled trials comparing physical therapy interventions for 1,482 participants with osteoarthritis of the knee. Follow-up in the included studies spans up to 18 months. Three categories of therapy emerge as providing statistically significant reductions in fall risk. Strengthening therapies, aerobic training, and a movement and balance protocol create a 55% improvement in fall-risk measures such as gait speed, the timed-up-and-go test, and the six-minute-walk test (reported as standardized mean difference).

Two physical therapy approaches did not independently create significant changes in fall risk for patients with osteoarthritis of the knee. These are phototherapy (890 nm radiation) and aquatic therapy. In conclusion, the presence of painful osteoarthritis of the knee does not prevent physical therapy from reducing fall risk. Physical therapy interventions can decrease pain, improve flexibility, and improve fall-risk measures 55% or more.



Help Your Patients Get the Care They Need Immediately. Letter of Protection Accepted.

Studies on various types of spinal injuries and other injuries show much better outcomes when thorough, active care is begun without delay. For injury cases, we accept letters of protection so more of your patients can get the care they need immediately.

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