

OBSERVATIONAL STUDY ON THE PREVALENCE OF INDIVIDUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS FOR HIP FRACTURE IN ELDERLY POPULATION

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If on one hand, individual and environmental risk factors for hip fracture are rather well known, the prevalence and the impact of each of these single factors on the local reality are unknown and their knowledge is of utmost importance in order to undertake useful strategies for prevention among the population, above all non pharmacological strategies.

Elderly patients, of both sexes, consecutively admitted to a hospital for a first femoral fracture of non cancerous nature. Specific and validated questionnaires are distributed among the patients by specifically trained operators. Furthermore, data regarding personal identification, anthropometric data, medical history and living conditions were gathered. Simultaneously, the same questionnaire is being distributed among a control group.

A first analysis of 100 elderly patients (76 female and 24 male) with hip fracture are reported. The fracture is not due to an efficient trauma and the patients are in a sufficient neurological state to fill in the questionnaire. The average age was 81 ± 3 years. Before the fracture, more than a 50% of the patients walked less than 30 minutes a day or walked less than 1 km a day or stood upright less than 4 hours a day; 20% of them needed walking assistance and 10% was not able to stand up from a chair. Among the risk factors for fracture present in their medical history, only 3% reported a hip fracture in the family (mother) and only 5% smoked or used to smoke. In 96% of the cases, the fracture was associated to a fall, in 74% of the cases the fall was from standing height. In 73% of the cases, the accident occurred at home, mostly in the kitchen or in the bedroom and in 23% of the cases an object contributed to the fall. 40% of the patients had already fallen at least once during the last year and 25% of them more than once. In 34% of the cases, the patient had already suffered from a fracture after the age of 50; only 15% of the patients had done a densitometry, 12% had taken therapy for osteoporosis during the last year and only 8% had taken vitamin D. These preliminary results already point out in which direction we should move in order to prevent femoral fractures among the elderly.