FACTORS RELATED TO FALLS AMONG COMMUNITY DWELLING ELDERLY

Piyathida Kuhirunyaratn, Prasert Prasomrak and Bangonsri Jindawong

Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen, Thailand

Abstract. Falls among the elderly can lead to disability, hospitalization and premature death. This study aimed to determine the factors related to falls among community dwelling elderly. This case-control study was conducted at the Samlum Primary Care Unit (SPCU), Khon Kaen, Thailand. Cases were elderly individuals who had fallen within the previous six months and controls were elderly who had not fallen during that same time period. Subjects were taken from elderly persons registered at the SPCU. The sample size was calculated to be 111 cases and 222 controls. Face to face interviews were conducted with subjects between May and June, 2011. The response rate was 100%. On bivariate analysis, the statistically significant factors related to falls were: regular medication use, co-morbidities, mobility, depression, cluttered rooms, slippery floors, unsupported toilets (without a hand rail), sufficient exercise, rapid posture change and wearing slippers. When controlling for others significant factors, multiple logistic regression revealed significant factors were: regular medication use (AOR: 2.22; 95%CI: 1.19-4.12), depression (AOR: 1.76, 95%CI: 1.03-2.99), sufficient exercise (AOR: 0.34; 95%CI: 0.19-0.58) and wearing slippery shoes (AOR: 2.31; 95%CI: 1.24-4.29). Interventions need to be considered to modify these significant factors associated with falls and education should be provided to these at risk.

Keywords: falls, elderly, community

Correspondence: Piyathida Kuhirunyaratn, Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen 40002, Thailand.
Tel: 66 (0) 43 363588; Fax: 66 (0) 43 202488
E-mail: spiyat@kku.ac.th