

Longitudinal study of people aging with long-term physical disabilities:

FALLS

and Participation

Background

In the US, falls are the **3rd** leading cause of unintentional injury leading to death for all ages.



More than one in four older adults fall each year.

People with early- and midlife-onset of **physical disability** are also at risk for falls.

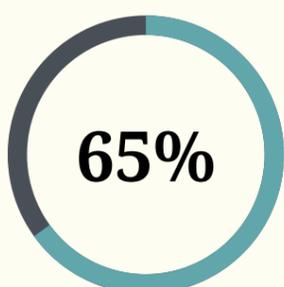
Information about falling and people aging with long-term physical disability is limited

We surveyed 474 people aging with physical disability (between the ages of 45 and 65) to:

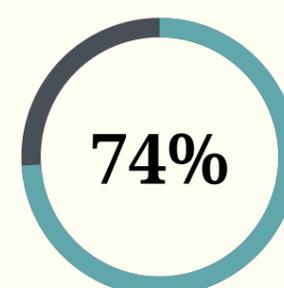
- Determine the prevalence of falls, fall-related injury, and fear of falling
- Examine relationships between falls and health conditions
- Explore the relationship between falls and community participation

Results

Falls, Injuries, and Fear of Falling

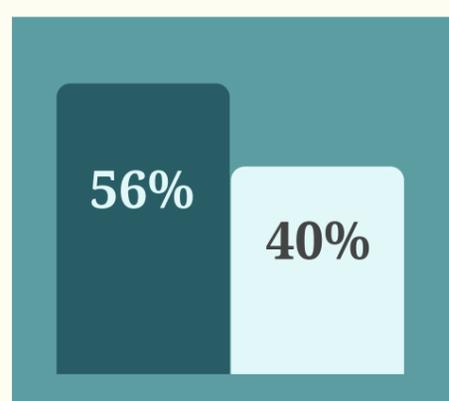


Reported having fallen in the previous year



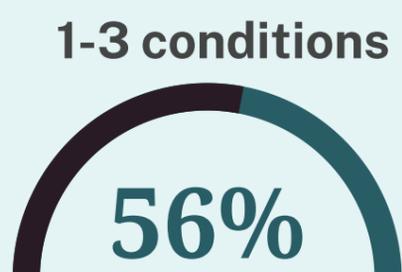
Reported a fear of falling

Injury Among Participants Who Reported a Fall

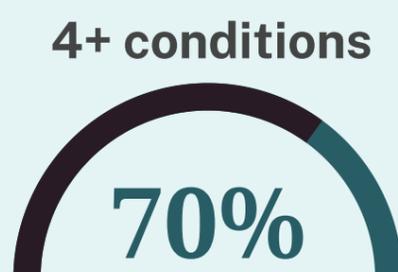


Injured after fall
Went to emergency department for fall-related injury

Falls and Number of Health Conditions



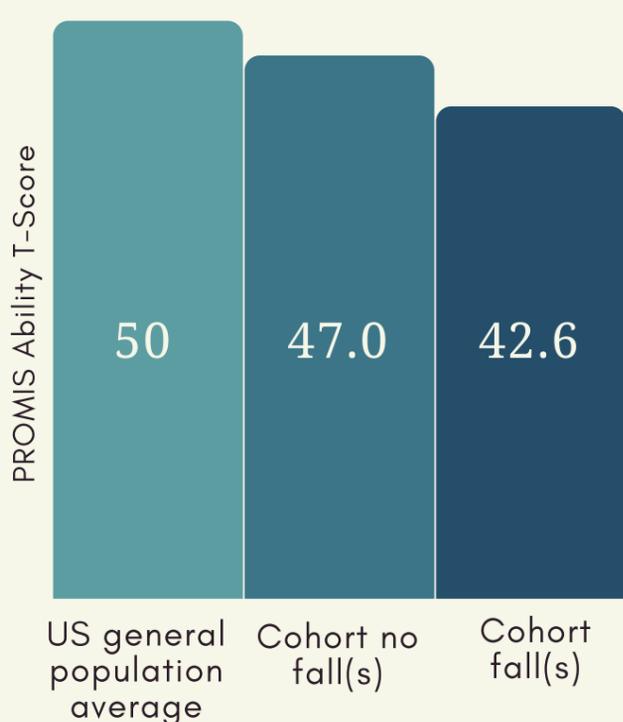
56% of participants with **three or fewer health conditions** had a fall



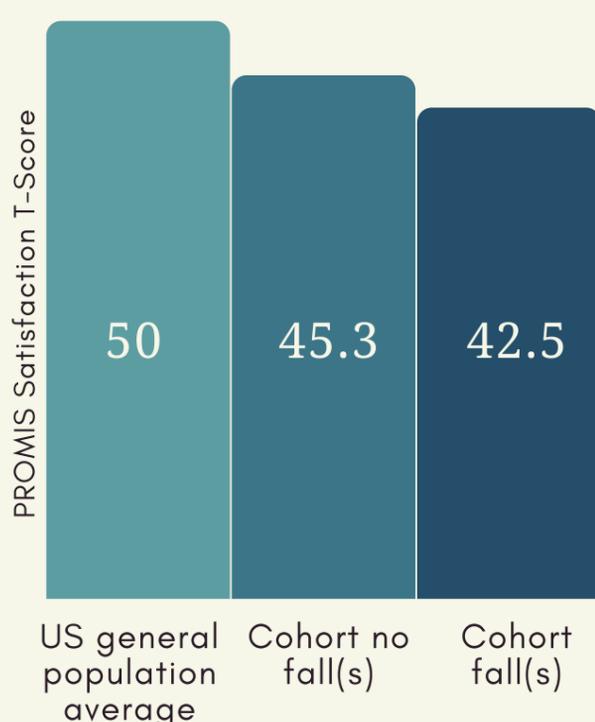
70% of participants with **four or more health conditions** had a fall

Falls and Participation

Ability to participate in social roles and activities



Satisfaction with participation in social roles and activities



Our participants, particularly those with falls, reported lower ability to participate in social roles/activities and lower satisfaction with their participation in social roles/activities than the general US population.

Key Points

- People aging with long-term physical disabilities reported falling at higher rates than the general 65+ population.
- People aging with long-term physical disabilities who fell had more health conditions than those who did not fall.
- People aging with long-term physical disabilities who fell reported lower ability to participate in their social roles/activities, and lower satisfaction with their participation, than those who did not fall.