

GP Fact Sheet: Disabling Foot Pain

Evidence

- An intervention in older people with disabling foot pain: ↓ falls up to **36%** (Spink et. al. 2011).



Key points

- Foot pain affects between 20-30% of community-dwelling older people.
- Foot problems, particularly disabling foot pain, can impair balance and gait and decrease mobility, leading to increased risk of falls.
- The intervention described by Spink et. al. (2011) consisted of:
 - A foot and ankle exercise program
 - Foot orthoses
 - Advice on footwear
 - General fall prevention education

Referral and patient resources

- [FootHold foot and ankle exercise program](http://www.foohold.org.au) (www.foohold.org.au).
- A physiotherapist or exercise physiologist may also recommend appropriate foot and ankle exercises.
 - Australian Physiotherapy Association: [Find a physiotherapist](#) (treatment: gerontology or musculoskeletal).
 - Exercise & Sports Science Australia: [Find an exercise physiologist](#) (specialty: older adult).
- Podiatry National: [Find a podiatrist](#) (member interest area: aged care).
- Patient education leaflet: [Falls Prevention - Foot care and Footwear](#) (click [here](#) for other patient flyers on the NSW Clinical Excellence Commission website).

References

Spink, M. J., Menz, H. B., Fotoohabadi, M. R., Wee, E., Landorf, K. B., Hill, K. D., & Lord, S. R. (2011). [Effectiveness of a multifaceted podiatry intervention to prevent falls in community dwelling older people with disabling foot pain: randomised controlled trial](#). *BMJ*, 342, d3411.