

CAPTURE Falls Education

Post-Fall Clinical Assessment

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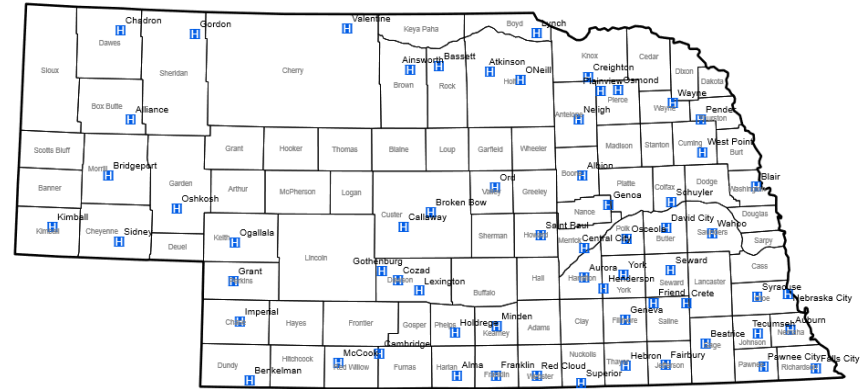


Image Credit: <https://dhhs.ne.gov>

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Objectives

1

Describe resources that can be used to guide post-fall clinical assessment

2

Determine strategies for education of staff on post-fall clinical assessment



Objective 1:

**Describe resources that can be used
to guide post-fall clinical
assessment**



Post-Fall Clinical Assessment (1)

[CAPTURE Falls Roadmap Post-Fall Clinical Assessment](#)



- Assessment for injury should occur immediately
- Depending on the patient's injury risk factors, assessment may need to continue for several hours

Assess patients for potential injury after a fall occurs so that appropriate medical care can be provided

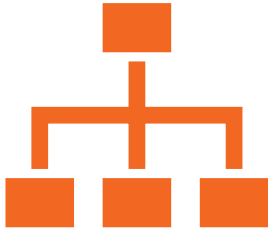


Post-Fall Clinical Assessment (2)

[CAPTURE Falls Roadmap Post-Fall Clinical Assessment](#)



- Various checklists and decision trees exist
- Common components
 - Check vital signs
 - Assess for bleeding and clean/dress any wounds
 - Assess for bruising or swelling
 - Assess for signs/symptoms of fracture or spinal injury (pain to palpation, bone or joint deformities)
 - Assess for signs/symptoms of head injury if known to hit head or if fall was unwitnessed (neurological assessment)
 - Notify physician/PA/APRN and family
 - Provide analgesia as needed
 - Consider imaging



Post-Fall Clinical Assessment: Resources (1)



[CAPTURE Falls Roadmap Post-Fall Clinical Assessment](#)

[US Department of Veterans Affairs Post Fall Procedures/Management](#)

- Example post-fall management protocol (See Section VII and Attachment 3)
- Differentiates follow-up for patients with and without head trauma

[The VIP treatment: A Comprehensive Post-Fall Assessment Guideline \(American Nurse Journal, 2023\)](#)

- VIP = Visualize, Palpate for Injuries, Proceed with Care
- QI protocol developed for falls in LTC, but could be applied to hospital setting
- Algorithm that guides nurses through assessment of consciousness, head-to-toe inspection for injuries, and scheduled re-checks
- Based on Advanced Trauma Life support algorithm by the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma



Post-Fall Clinical Assessment: Resources (2)



[CAPTURE Falls Roadmap Post-Fall Clinical Assessment](#)

[2023 Post-Fall Multidisciplinary Management Guidelines \(Western Australia Dept. of Health\)](#)

- Outlines steps to take immediately, and within various time intervals up to 48 hours post fall
- Includes specific considerations regarding whether to conduct a CT scan of the head or neck
- Differentiates course of action between witnessed and unwitnessed falls, whether head was struck and if the patient is on anticoagulants/antiplatelets

[Clinical Excellence Commission Post-Fall Assessment and Management Guide \(New South Wales, Australia Ministry of Health\)](#)

- Guidance and algorithms for the immediate response and ongoing observation/monitoring after a fall
- Includes special considerations for patients at risk of bleeding, head injury, sepsis, and delirium



Objective 2:

**Determine strategies for education
of staff on post-fall clinical
assessment**



Post-Fall Clinical Assessment: Staff Education



[CAPTURE Falls Roadmap Post-Fall Clinical Assessment](#)



Describe the post-fall clinical assessment protocol used in your facility



Perform a post-fall clinical assessment using a simulated patient case



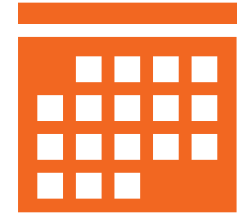
New employee orientation



Annual education



Fall Prevention Awareness Week (September)



Patient Safety Awareness Week (March)

Also consider who needs this training (which professions, level of experience of staff, etc.)



Summary

Multiple resources exist for post-fall clinical assessment. Checklists and decision trees may provide helpful structure to staff.



References and Resources

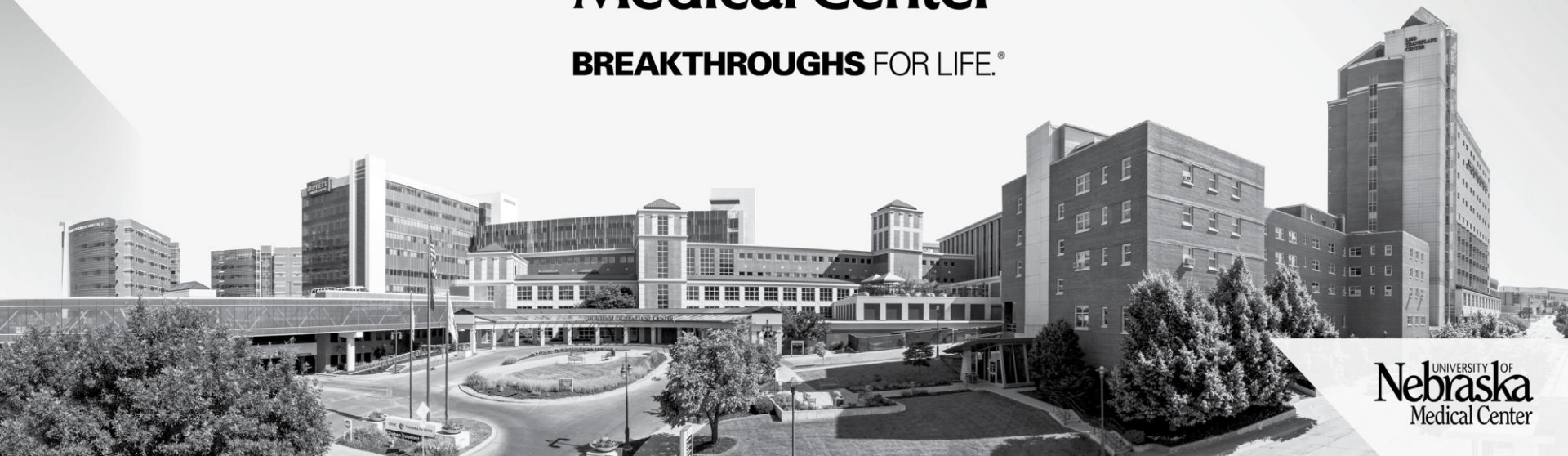
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