Falls and the Social Isolation of Older Adults: A Secondary Analysis of Data from the National Health and Aging Trends Study (NHATS)
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BACKGROUND
A lack of conceptual clarity regarding social isolation and the numerous approaches to measurement make the comparison of studies difficult and hinders the development of a cohesive body of social isolation knowledge. In this way the lack of conceptual clarity makes intervention development challenging.

The isolation of older adults impacts health behaviors along with psychological and physical health. Social isolation is associated with all-cause mortality, development of a cohesive body of social isolation knowledge. In this way the lack of conceptual clarity makes intervention development challenging.

Up to 39% of falls in older adults are the cause of serious injuries that can restrict mobility, decrease quality of life, and increase the risk of premature death.

is evident, the nature of that relationship is not well documented in the research literature.

Calculation of ‘indices’ of isolation that combine measures related to contacts, social interaction

Theoretical these two concepts are related and the results suggest that the social isolation construct and depression have a moderate relationship and are positively related.

There was a statistically significant correlation between the two variables.

Increasing the clarity and understanding of social isolation is important for future research.

Single item measures—such as living alone—do not clearly identify indices of social isolation for developing research interventions.

The social isolation construct was developed with data from the National Health and Aging Trends Study (NHATS). More social isolation research is needed with this nationally representative data set.

The health consequences of social isolation and falls are evident in the literature, and this study adds to the evidence suggesting an association between these two syndromes.

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