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[J Am Geriatr Soc. 2000 Jul;48\(7\):721-5. doi: 10.1111/j.1532-5415.2000.tb04744.x.](#)

# Urinary incontinence: does it increase risk for falls and fractures? Study of Osteoporotic Fractures Research Group

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## Abstract

**Objective:** To determine if urge urinary incontinence is associated with risk of falls and non-spine fractures in older women.

**Methods:** Type and frequency of incontinent episodes were assessed by 6,049 community-dwelling women using a self-completed questionnaire. Postcards were subsequently mailed every 4 months to inquire about falls and fractures. Incident fractures were confirmed by radiographic report. Logistic and proportional hazard models were used to assess the independent association of urge urinary incontinence and risk of falling or fracture.

**Results:** The mean age of the women was 78.5 (+/- 4.6) years. During an average follow-up of 3 years, 55% of women reported falling, and 8.5% reported fractures. One-quarter of the women (1,493) reported weekly or more frequent urge incontinence, 19% (1,137) reported weekly or more frequent stress incontinence, and 708 (12%) reported both types of incontinence. In multivariate models, weekly or more frequent urge incontinence was associated independently with risk of falling (odds ratio = 1.26; 95% confidence interval (CI), 1.14-1.40) and with non-spine nontraumatic fracture (relative hazard 1.34; 95% CI, 1.06-1.69; P = .02). Stress incontinence was not associated independently with falls or fracture.

**Conclusions:** Weekly or more frequent urge incontinence was associated independently with an increased risk of falls and non-spine, nontraumatic fractures in older women. Urinary frequency, nocturia, and rushing to the bathroom to avoid urge incontinent episodes most likely increase the risk of falling, which then results in fractures. Early diagnosis and appropriate treatment of urge incontinence may decrease the risk of fracture.

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[Wolf SL](#), [Riolo L](#), [Ouslander JG](#).

[J Am Geriatr Soc. 2000 Jul;48\(7\):847-8. doi: 10.1111/j.1532-5415.2000.tb04765.x.](#)

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