

Predicting Fall Risk in Primary Care: The Timed Up & Go (TUG) Test

Equipment required:

- Standard chair, 46 cm seat height, with or without arms
- Visible mark 3 meters from chair
- Individual's customary walking aid
- Stop watch

On "Go", the individual rises, walks to the 3 m mark at a comfortable, safe pace, turns, walks back to the chair and sits down.



The score is the actual time required to complete the task. A practice trial is recommended.

Can they TUG in ten?

Clinical Notes:

- The purpose of the TUG is to detect fallers and identify those who need further evaluation
- It should be performed yearly for those ≥ 65
- 10 second rule: those who cannot complete the TUG in this time, or who demonstrate unsteadiness performing the test, require further assessment
- In a study of community-dwelling adults:
 - 13.5 seconds correctly predicted fallers 90% of the time
 - 14 seconds indicated HIGH risk for falls

There is no such thing as a trivial fall - the next one might be devastating.

Adapted from: Shumway-Cook, A., Brauer, S., & Woollacott, M. (2000). Predicting the probability for falls in community-dwelling older adults using the Timed Up & Go test. *Physical Therapy*, 80, 9, p. 896 – 903.