

## **Balancing Act: Functional Tests and Assessments for Balance and Fall Risk**

4 CE HOURS / .4 CEUs

### **PDH Academy Course #OT-1904**

#### **Course Abstract**

Census data tells us that elderly populations are growing at an unprecedented rate – and we know as therapists that the elderly have the greatest risk of fall-related injury or death. This course presents a discussion of risk factors for falls, followed by an examination of evidence-based tests and assessments for balance and fall risk, including screening tools for cognitive impairment, functional tests pertaining to balance and fall risk, and questionnaires that assess confidence with mobility and concern for falling. It concludes with an overview of fall-related resources.

Target audience: Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapy Assistants, Physical Therapists, Physical Therapist Assistants (no prerequisites).

*NOTE: Links provided within the course material are for informational purposes only. No endorsement of processes or products is intended or implied.*



This course is offered for 0.4 CEUs (Intermediate level; Category 2 – Occupational Therapy Process: Evaluation).

The assignment of AOTA CEUs does not imply endorsement of specific course content, products, or clinical procedures by AOTA.

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#### **Learning Objectives**

At the end of this course, learners will be able to:

- Identify statistics pertaining to falls and fall-related injuries
- Recognize age related physiological changes, with attention to how each contributes to fall risk
- Distinguish between screening tools for cognition
- Distinguish between screening tools for balance and fall risk
- Recall fall-related resources available to patients, caregivers, and health care workers

#### **Timed Topic Outline**

I. Statistics: Falls and Fall-Related Injuries (20 minutes)

II. Risk Factors for Falls (40 minutes)

Age-Related Physiological Changes that Contribute to Fall Risk, Relevant Research, Modifiable Risk Factors for Falls, Alignment and Posture

III. Importance of Testing, When to Test, and Which Tests to Choose (10 minutes)

- Importance of Testing, When to Test, Which Tests to Choose
- IV. Screening Tools: Cognition (10 minutes)
    - Test and Assessment Overview
  - V. Screening and Assessment Tools: Balance and Fall Risk (90 minutes)
    - Databases on Functional Testing, Test and Assessment Overview, American Physical Therapy Association Section Recommendations
  - VI. Resources for Patients, Caregivers and Health Care Workers (20 minutes)
    - Professional Resources, Evidence-Based Community Fall Prevention Programs
  - VII. Conclusion and Appendix (30 minutes)
  - VIII. References and Exam (20 minutes)

### **Delivery & Instructional Method**

Distance Learning – Independent. Correspondence/internet text-based self-study, including a provider-graded multiple choice final exam.

*To earn continuing education credit for this course, you must achieve a passing score of 80% on the final exam.*

### **Registration & Cancellation**

Visit [www.pdhtherapy.com](http://www.pdhtherapy.com) to register for online courses and/or request correspondence courses.

As PDH Academy offers self-study courses only, provider cancellations due to inclement weather, instructor no-shows, and/or insufficient enrollment are not concerns. In the unlikely event that a self-study course is temporarily unavailable, already-enrolled participants will be notified by email. A notification will also be posted on the relevant pages of our website.

Customers who cancel orders within five business days of the order date receive a full refund. Cancellations can be made by phone at (888)564-9098 or email at [support@pdhacademy.com](mailto:support@pdhacademy.com).

### **Accessibility and/or Special Needs Concerns?**

Contact Customer Service by phone at (888)564-9098 or email at [support@pdhacademy.com](mailto:support@pdhacademy.com).

### **Course Author Bio & Disclosure**

Andrea Perrea, MPT, DHS, GCS, CSCS, is a licensed physical therapist with over 23 years of clinical experience, primarily in home care and outpatient therapy, and over 17 years teaching experience. She holds a doctorate degree in Health Science with emphasis in education and geriatrics. She is a Certified Geriatric Specialist through the American Physical Therapy Association, a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist through the National Strength and Conditioning Association, and a member of the American Physical Therapy Association, the APTA Geriatrics Section, and the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

Dr. Perrea has taught more than 300 continuing education courses since 2000. She taught as adjunct faculty for the Missouri Western University in the PTA program. In 2012 she instructed for the Missouri Alliance for Home Care and the Indiana Home Care Association. Dr. Perrea presented at the 2015 Rehab Summit in Orlando FL. She currently teaches courses on the following topics: Functional Testing and Skilled Documentation in Geriatric Therapy, Exercise Programs for Frail Elderly, Balance Assessments and Fall Prevention Programs, Strength Training for Function: Program Design for Frail to Fit Seniors, and Expand Your Functional Test Toolkit.

**DISCLOSURE:** Financial – Andrea Perrea received a stipend as an author of this course. Nonfinancial – No relevant nonfinancial relationship exists.