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PENSRI LAUSAWATCHAIKUL: RELATED FACTORS
AND OUTCOME OF FALLS IN THE ELDERLY. THESIS
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This descriptive correlational study aimed to determine the fall-related factors and outcome of falls in community-dwelling elders. The subjects comprised one hundred and three elderly, who came to the Emergency Room and Orthopaedic Out Patients Department at Ramathibodi Hospital, for examination and/or follow up after falls from January to May 1999. The inclusion criteria were as follows: a) age 60 and over, b) fall within 6 months, c) agree to participate in the study, and d) be able to understand and speak Thai. Data were collected by a structured interview, and other relevant data from medical records.

The results showed that the majority of falls took place in and around the patients' homes, in which the bathroom was the most common location of the incident. The main causes of falls were extrinsic factors, of which slipping was the most frequently reported. The results may imply that the characteristics of floor design and bathroom style in Thai homes are not suitable and safe for the elderly. Fractures were the most common injuries of falls. In addition to the physical impact, there were emotional impacts resulting from the falls. The factors related to severity of injury were activity at the time of falls ($\chi^2 = 10.99$, $df = 2$, $p = .004$) and number of falls in the past six months ($\chi^2 = 6.40$, $df = 2$, $p = .04$). The results provide several important considerations for reducing the risk factors or preventing repeated falls of the elderly. The results were also useful for developing an educational program for prevention of falls and the reduction of risk factors for the elderly, caregivers, health care providers, and the community at large.