

What is frailty?

Frailty is a medical condition of reduced function or health. When a person is frail they are more likely to have other health problems. Their body does not have the ability to cope with minor illness and small changes can trigger rapid and dramatic deterioration.

How is frailty managed?

Frailty can be reversible in the early stages and proper action and collaboration of individuals, caregivers and medical professionals can reduce negative health outcomes associated with frailty. Health care providers can recommend strategies to individuals and caregivers to prevent or reduce frailty such as activity, vaccinations, optimization of medication, social interaction, and healthy eating. If frailty or pre-frailty is a concern, talk with the person you care for and their health care team.

There is an eLearning Course on this topic where the following is discussed in more detail:

- What is frailty?
- What are the effects of frailty on older adults?
- How can frailty be prevented?

References

Collard, R. M., Boter, H., Schoevers, R. A., & Oude Voshaar, R. C. (2012). Prevalence of frailty in community-dwelling older persons: A systematic review. *American Geriatrics Society*, 60 (8), 1487-1492. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-5415.2012.04054.x>

Fried, L. P., Tangen, C. M., Walston, J., Newman, A. B., Hirsch, C., Gottdiener, J., . . . McBurnie, M.A. (2001). Frailty in older adults: Evidence for a phenotype. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series A*, 56 (3), M146–M157. Retrieved from <https://academic.oup.com/biomedgerontology/article/56/3/M146/545770>

B.C. Ministry of Health. (2017). Frailty in older adults - Early identification and management. Retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/practitioner-professional-resources/bc-guidelines/frailty>