

Impact of visual impairment on falls and fear of falling in older adults

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Vision and falls in older adults

Project overview

1. Quantitative

Visual functions in a falls population

Prospective observational case-control study (83 pairs)

2. Qualitative

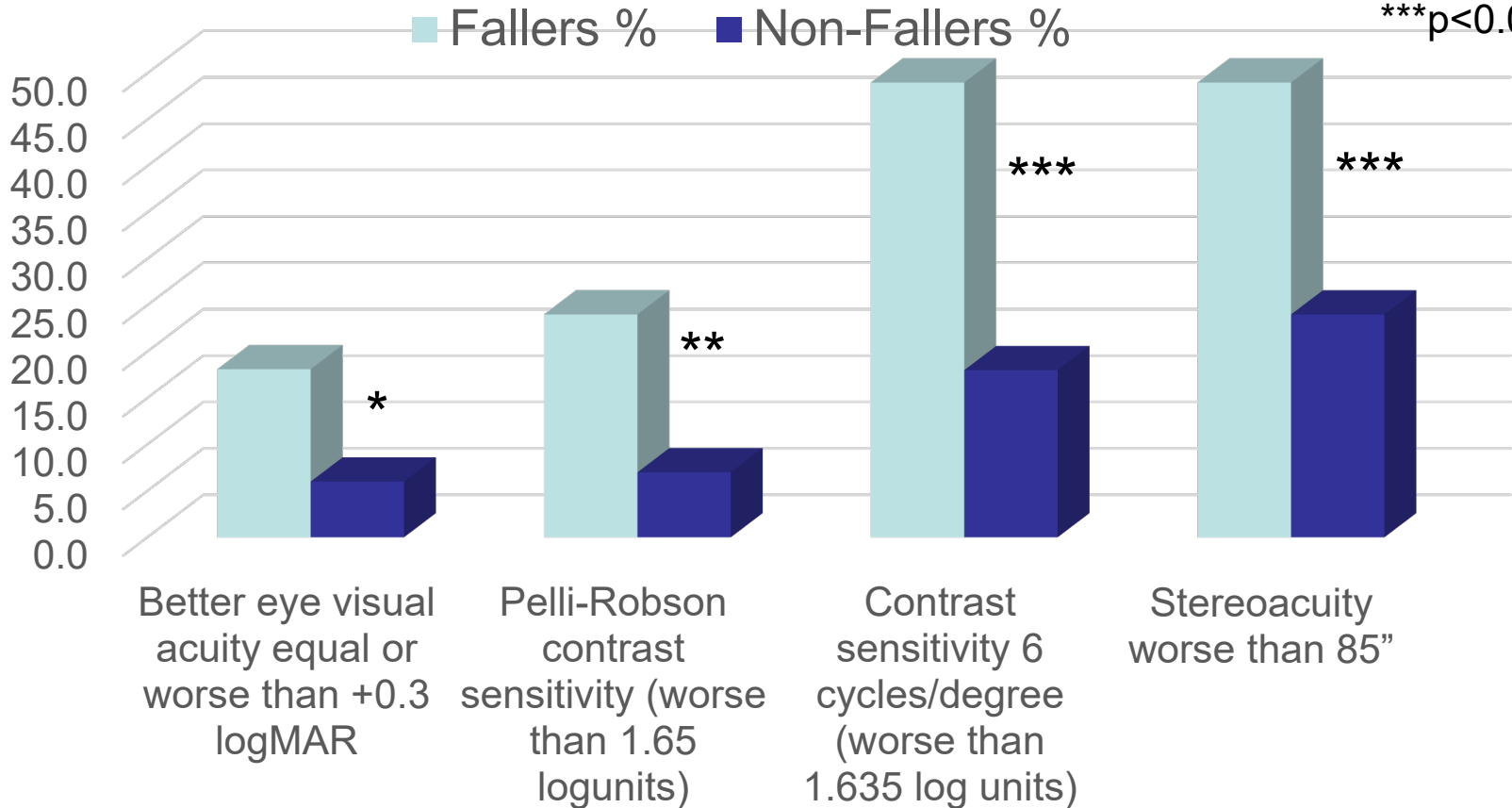
Interviews with visually impaired (VI) (AMD, glaucoma, cataract) fallers (N=15)

3. Qualitative

Interviews with recently diagnosed AMD, glaucoma and cataract patients who have not suffered a fall since their diagnosis (N=15)

Proportion of fallers vs non-fallers with impaired visual functions (N=83)

*p<0.05
**p<0.01
***p<0.001



Qualitative data-emerging themes

Falls participants with age related ophthalmological conditions

- 'Fearful' or 'Cautious'
- Physical vs sensory impairments
- 'Missing the step'
- Resilience

Older adults recently diagnosed with an age related ophthalmological conditions

- Healthcare information
- Value of sight
- Fear of losing independence

Impact

- Multifactorial assessment of falls patients must include an assessment of visual functions
- Potential impact on cataract surgery in older adults to avoid deficits in contrast sensitivity and stereoacuity
- Empower older adults with access to healthcare information
- Enablers for social support and networks for individuals across the life-course.

Thank you !

“You notice as you get older, you get...it takes you longer to recover from things, you become more fearful of things, even if it’s only psychologically, but you tend to take your time more or you know you question yourself more”.

(62 year old lady with age-related macular degeneration who had fallen)