WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

1. 70-85% of patients with cognitive impairment dementia will fall EVERY year.
2. 2x as likely to experience falls than adults without cognitive impairment.
3. Gait is no longer regarded as an automated motor task.

4. 2 components necessary to effectively reduce falls among the elderly

CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

**Prevention: Screening & Referrals**

- Key to determining the presence & degree of cognitive impairment to prevention of falls.
- Questions to ask yourself when screening a patient:
  - Does this patient have a history of falling?
  - Does this patient engage in risky behavior? (i.e. not using walker or waiting for assistance, impulsivity etc.)
  - Does this patient exhibit difficulty paying attention, recalling basic information

**Intervention: The role of the Speech Language Pathologist**

- Determine specific areas of cognitive impairment that maybe affecting safety & Activities of Daily Living
  - Attention
  - Visuospatial Skills
  - Language
  - Memory
- Develop and implement cognitive linguistic strategies to improve function
  - Visual cues
  - Memory strategies (i.e. notebook, calendar etc.)
  - Environmental Modifications
  - Training activities that encourage neuroplasticity