

Title: Disaster preparedness for older adults: what we learned?

In the event of disaster, older adults can be highly vulnerable. We need to care the older adults when the disaster occurs. But much more important point is that preparedness for older adults from usual. Therefore, we planned this symposium.

First, Dr. Ohtsura refers the actual situation and issues on disaster preparedness among community-dwelling older adults, based on a large-scale survey about them in Japan.

Second, Prof. Furukawa pointed out that the elderly people living in temporary apartments were at a high risk of cognitive impairment and “out-of-home activities” and “walking” could possibly maintain the stability of cognitive functions.

Third, Prof. Yasumura emphasizes that keeping in mind that older adults are at higher risk of worsening health during and after disasters is important, based on data showing that the negative evacuation effect has continued for several years after the disaster.

Finally, Dr. Murata concludes that it needs building of reconstruction plan and support system that suit life plan of each person. And she also refers the importance of inclusion of nurses in policy making because of their closeness to the victims and their ability to listen to direct voices at disaster sites.

We greatly appreciate your comments and questions.