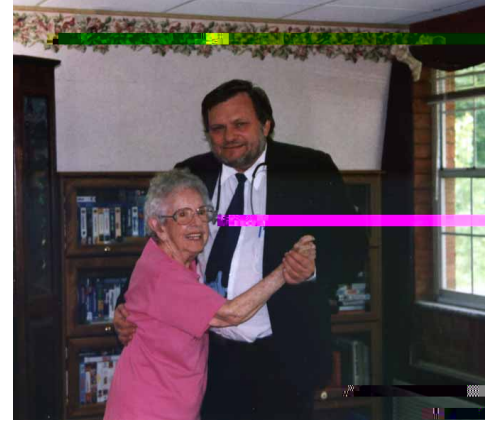


DANCING

as a Method to Test Gait and Balance



questions listed below while dancing with the patient. This simple system demonstrates the degree of disability. Failure to perform any of these routines appropriately represents a problem with gait and balance. The

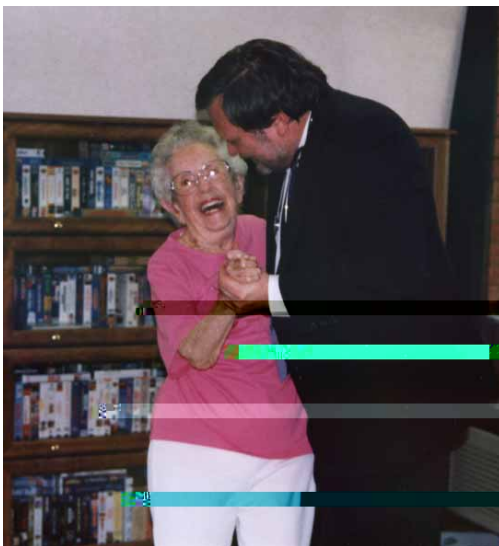


Dr. John Morley has been a long-time advocate of developing geriatric assessments that are easy to use and fun to perform. Perhaps his favorite assessment is one to determine gait and balance. Dr. Morley maintains that gait and balance can easily be assessed while dancing with an older person. Dancing is more fun for both the elder and him than administering a classical gait and balance test. At Saint Louis University and at the St. Louis VA Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center (GRECC), we ask the yes/no



greater the number of “no” responses corresponds with a greater degree of problem. The speed at which any of these dance steps is executed is dependent on the physical stamina of the patient, not the doctor. Dr. Morley assures us that he uses this test on men and women alike. He doesn’t tell us how he determines who gets to lead, but we suspect we know the answer.

We recommend that a simple circle dance with the two dancers holding hands is sufficient to answer these questions. We do not recommend the tango or the limbo! ■



1. Does the person follow the dance steps?
