FOUR SQUARE STEP TEST

Purpose: Clinical measure of rapid stepping and obstacle avoidance. Requires rapid change in direction while stepping over a low obstacle. Can predict fallers.

Requirements: Stop watch and four canes (or 1” high sticks such as PVC pipe) laid out on floor to create four continuous squares as in the diagram.

Scoring: One practice and two timed trials are completed. The best time of the two timed trials is recorded. If the patient fails to complete the sequence, loses his/her balance or makes contact with the canes, the trial is repeated.

Interpretation: 15 seconds is the cut-score. Patients who score slower than 15 seconds have impaired dynamic standing balance and may be at risk for falls.