

IF YOU DON'T USE IT YOU LOSE IT

ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE BALANCE AND STRENGTH AND PREVENT FALLS.

ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH EXERCISE?

Being physically active helps you maintain healthy bones and stay on your feet. It can be difficult to come to terms with your body changing with age, but remember that exercise is not only for the young. Research shows we can substantially reduce our risk of a fall by doing moderate exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week and by incorporating balance and leg strength exercises in our daily routine.

Here are some exercises you can do daily at home (stick this on the fridge as a daily reminder)

Heel-to-toe standing/walking

Helps with balance

- With fingertips on something solid to help balance, stand heel-to-toe, bend your knees slightly and keep still for ten seconds (like you're on a tightrope)
- You can vary the exercise by walking slowly, placing your heel to touch the toe of the other foot.

Knee raises

Helps with climbing stairs and getting in and out of cars

- With fingertips on something solid to help balance, lift a knee to hip level and hold it for five seconds
- Repeat with the other leg
- Then repeat 8 times.

Heel raise

Helps with walking and climbing stairs

- With fingertips on something solid to help balance, lift both heels off the floor and stand on your toes for three seconds, then slowly lower your heels to the floor
- Repeat five times.

Sit to stand

Helps with getting up and down from a chair or toilet, and in and out of the car

- Stand up slowly from a chair, keeping your knees slightly apart. To make it harder, cross your arms
- in front of your chest or hold them out in front of you at shoulder height
- Then lower yourself back down into the chair
- Repeat 5 times



Staying physically active is the single most important thing we can do to remain fit and independent.

WORK WITH US!

We created this project after working with a client, Maureen, who was 82 years of age and her motto was, "If you don't use it, you lose it". She made sure she moved everyday to stay young and mobile. Our vision is to get as many seniors moving as possible.

If you are able to get to an exercise group, '**Stepping On**' is a free falls prevention group program for older, community dwelling people including those living independently in retirement villages. The program consists of 7 weekly, 2 hour group sessions, with a booster session 3 months after completion. Not only is it great for falls prevention, but fun socially as well.

A fall can happen to anyone and can also have serious consequences. Falls are more common as people get older. Stay safe at home - some tips.



TRIP & SLIP HAZARDS

- Remove clutter or things you could trip over at home
- Wipe up spills on the floor straightaway
- Remove or secure loose mats
- Ensure outside pathways are clear and power cords and/or hoses are rolled up
- Avoid rushing!
- Use walking aids if advised
- Be careful on uneven surfaces



FOOTWEAR

- Wear properly fitted shoes with non-skid soles
- See your doctor or a health professional such as a podiatrist if you have foot pain or health problems that affect your feet



MEDICATION

- Take medicine/tablets as advised
- Talk to your doctor about reviewing your medicine/tablets regularly
- Ask your doctor if your medicines have any side effects



HOME SAFETY

- Use hand rails on stairs and in bathrooms and toilets
- Have your home assessed by an Occupational Therapist for special equipment e.g. shower chairs, raised toilet seats etc
- Avoid climbing ladders or on chairs, ask for help where possible
- Have good lighting, inside and outside your home
- At night, keep a night light on or use a sensor light
- Keep your mobile phone handy/wear a personal alarm



EXERCISE

- Talk to a physiotherapist or health practitioner about exercises to improve muscle strength and balance



IS YOUR VISION CHANGING?

Are you seeing clearly, less able to judge distance and depth and adjusting to sudden changes in light and dark? Poor vision increases your risk of falling.

Are you taking medications?

Feeling drowsy, unsteady, dizzy or confused? Some medications can increase your risk of falls, especially those for anxiety, depression or difficulty sleeping.



ARE YOUR FEET SORE?

Feet can change shape and loose feeling. Painful and swollen feet make it difficult to walk and some shoes or slippers may cause you to stumble or trip

It's important to stay active in a way that works for you as you age . If you're experiencing pain that is a part of your everyday life, notify your primary care doctor, who can refer you to a specialist.

For more information on falls prevention and exercises you can do at home scan the QR code. NSW Fall Prevention and Healthy Ageing Network : Keeping active is essential for healthy ageing.

