

# Improve your balance and strength...

it is never too late to start!

Exercise that improves your balance and strength can help lower your risk of falling. When you are starting an exercise program remember to:

## Start slowly.

Start with a few repetitions of one or two exercises at a time, and gradually increase how much are you doing. Once you can do the exercises easily and comfortably, you can start to increase the difficulty.

## Use support.

Rest your hands on a counter top or sturdy table for support. You can gradually decrease the amount of support through your hands by only using your finger tips or by hovering your hands over the support surface.

## Wear appropriate footwear.

Wear shoes that fit well and provide good support outdoors and indoors. Running shoes are a good choice. Do not wear just slippers and socks in your home

## Listen to your body.

Only do the exercises you feel safe and comfortable doing. If any exercise causes you to feel increased pain, short of breath or so unsteady that you could fall, stop that exercise and talk to your doctor.

## Talk to your doctor about symptoms that may affect your balance.

If you feel dizzy or light-headed, or have blurred vision, ringing in your ears, significant weakness in your legs, or tingling or numbness in your feet, talk to your doctor before you start exercising.

*The simple exercises shown inside can help you improve your balance and strength.*

**Staying On Your Feet**   
*Taking Steps to Prevent Falls*

# Reduce your risk of falling! Every day...

- Do the exercises on this sheet.
- Do a total of at least 20-30 minutes of physical activity.
- Eat at least 3 nutritious meals.
- Drink 5-8 glasses of water.
- Take a supplement of 1,000 IU (international units) of vitamin D<sub>3</sub>.
- Wear shoes with a good grip and flat or low wide heel both inside and outside of your home. Avoid flip flops and slippers.
- Pick up any loose items on the floor of your home or yard.

To take action to prevent falls, visit

[www.preventfalls.ca](http://www.preventfalls.ca)



Winnipeg Regional  
Health Authority  
Caring for Health

Office régional de la  
santé de Winnipeg  
À l'écoute de notre santé

Manitoba 

# Home Balance & Strength Exercises



## Stand with one foot in front of the other (walk stance)

- Stand next to a sturdy table or counter for support.
- Place one foot in front of the other with a 10 cm (4 inch) gap between the toe of your back foot and heel of your front foot.
- Hold for 10 seconds and repeat with the other foot in front.

### For increased difficulty:

- 1 Use your hands less for support.
- 2 Place your back and front foot closer together.
- 3 Repeat it twice on each leg.
- 4 Slowly walk heel to toe alongside a table or counter.



## Lift your leg to the side

- Stand next to a sturdy table or counter for support.
- Keep your toes pointing forward, lift one leg out to the side and hold for 5 seconds.
- Slowly lower your leg back to the ground.
- Repeat with the other leg.
- Do this 8 times.

### For increased difficulty:

- 1 Use your hands less for support.
- 2 Slowly walk sideways alongside a table or bench, first to your left and then to your right.



## Raise up onto your toes

- Stand next to a sturdy table or counter for support.
- Raise onto your toes by lifting both heels off the ground, and hold for 5 seconds.
- Slowly lower your heels back to the ground.
- Do this 5 times.

### For increased difficulty:

- 1 Use your hands less for support.
- 2 Stand on your right leg and raise onto your toes. Repeat on your left leg.
- 3 Repeat it 10 times.

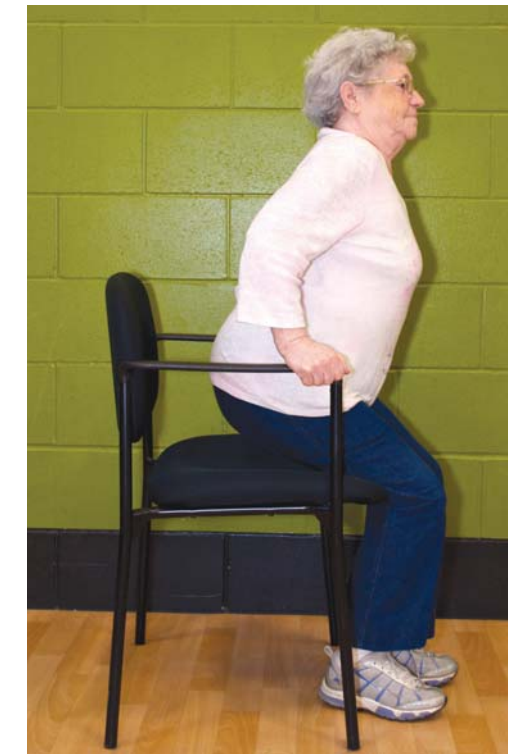


## Lift your knees

- Stand next to a sturdy table or counter for support.
- Lift your foot off the ground and hold it for 5 seconds.
- Repeat with the other foot.
- Do this 8 times on each leg.

### For increased difficulty:

- 1 Use your hands less for support.
- 2 Lift your knee to hip level.
- 3 Hold it for 10 seconds.



## Sit to stand from a chair

- Sit in a chair with arm rests.
- Scoot your bottom to the front edge of the chair and put your hands on the arm rests.
- Place your feet hip width apart.
- Lean forward and stand up slowly.
- Slowly lower yourself to sit back into the chair.
- Do this 5 times.

### For increased difficulty:

- 1 Use your hands less for support.
- 2 Repeat it 10 times.