



# Be Falls Smart...

## In What You Do-Physical Activity

Older adults want to live active and independent lives. Falls are not a natural part of aging. Maintaining your muscle strength, balance, endurance, and flexibility is the best way to keep you on your feet. Remember, as you age you need to “Move it or Lose it!” The good news is that you can take steps to prevent falls.

### Facts:

- According to Health Canada’s *Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living for Older Adults*:
  - Physical activity is any activity that moves your body and increases the amount of energy you use.
  - It’s never too late to get active.
  - Everyone can benefit from increased physical activity.
  - Be active, your way, everyday for life!
- **The greatest health risk for older adults is living an inactive life.**
- **Benefits of physical activity:**
  - Keeps your heart, lungs, bones and muscles healthy and strong.
  - Helps keep your muscles relaxed and your joints moving better.
  - Helps your balance and posture.
  - Helps you to move more easily.
  - Helps you catch yourself if you slip or trip.
  - Gives you increased energy.



### Physical Activity:

- Do at least 30 minutes of activity every day. You can break this into three sessions that last 10 minutes, if needed.
- Do activities you enjoy.

### Examples of Physical Activity would be:

#### Strength and balance activities:

- Wall pushups, lifting light weights, stair climbing, and tai chi.

#### Endurance (cardiovascular) activities:

- Walking, dancing, gardening, and swimming.

#### Flexibility activities:

- Tai chi, stretching, and yoga.

### Other Helpful Tips:

- Be safe. Consult your doctor before starting any new physical activity
- Start slow and easy.
- Follow Health Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living for Older Adults. Call **1-888-334-9769** to order a copy.
- Keep track of your activities – you will know how active you really are!

**If you have had a fall or a near fall, talk with your doctor.**

## For more information:

**Seniors' Health Website - Fall Prevention:**  
[www.albertahealthservices.ca/4356.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/4356.asp)

**Finding Balance Website:**  
[www.findingbalancealberta.ca](http://www.findingbalancealberta.ca)

**Health Link Alberta**  
In Calgary Area (403) 943-LINK (5465)  
Toll Free in Alberta 1-866-408-LINK (5465)

**...Prevent the Fall  
Before it Happens!**