

# Move for your Health

Brought to you by AHS Physiotherapists



## **Balance Exercises keep you on your feet.**

You can reduce your chance of falling by doing the right kind of exercise. Activity programs that are best at reducing falls include exercises performed in standing which challenge your balance and strengthen the muscles of your legs, body and arms. You could do this by going to a balance exercise class at least twice a week, or attending tai chi twice a week. A physiotherapist can help you choose the most appropriate exercises.

### **Benefits**

Being active throughout your life reduces your risk for chronic diseases, and helps you weather other health crises. Better balance and strength help you:

- Be more independent with your everyday activities.
- Get out in your community safely.
- Reduce serious injuries.
- Improve your mood and live a happier life.
- Sleep better and have less stress.

### **What's stopping you?**

#### FINDING THE RIGHT PROGRAM

- Resources vary from one community to the next. A physiotherapist can help you navigate the resources in your community to find the ones that are accessible and appropriate to your needs. A program should be safely progressed as your balance and fitness levels improve.

#### CONCERN ABOUT HEALTH CONDITIONS

- Get help. Physiotherapists are part of a multidisciplinary team that includes your doctor. Physiotherapists can advise you whether you need to see your doctor before beginning an exercise program. They can also refer you to other members of the team as needed.

#### FEAR OF FALLING

- Fear of falling can be very difficult to overcome. Working on an exercise program provided by a physiotherapist can increase your abilities and your confidence.

## **Tips**

A physiotherapist can:

- 1) Perform a fall risk assessment and provide an exercise prescription with specific balance exercises;
- 2) Help to identify barriers and assist you in strategizing to overcome them.

## **Additional Information**

If you want more information about what makes you at risk of falling you can go to these websites for more information:

Finding Balance: <http://www.findingbalancealberta.ca/>

Healthy U: <http://www.healthyalberta.com/activeliving.htm>

## **References**

Shubert, T., E. (2011). Evidence-based exercise prescription for balance and falls prevention: A current review of the literature. *Journal of Geriatric Physical Therapy* 34, p100-108.

Sherrington, C., Tiedemann, A., Fairhall ,N., Close, J.,C., Lord, S.,R. (2011). Exercise to prevent falls in older adults: an updated meta-analysis and best practice recommendations. *New South Wales Public Health Bulletin*; 22(3-4); p 78-83.

El-Khoury, F., Cassou,B., Charles, M.,A, Dargent-Molina, P. (2013). The effect of fall prevention exercise programmes on fall induced injuries in community dwelling older adults: systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials. *British Medical Journal* 2013; 347:f6234. doi: 0.1136/bmj.f6234