



Strength, Balance and Circulation

Each year, more than 2 million older Americans go to the emergency room because of fall-related injuries. A simple fall can cause a serious fracture of the arm, hand, ankle, or hip. Balance exercises can help you prevent falls and avoid the disability that may result from falling. Being physically active can help you continue to do the things you enjoy and stay independent as you age. Regular exercise and physical activity can reduce the risk of developing some diseases and disabilities that develop as people grow older. Studies show that people with arthritis, heart disease, or diabetes benefit from regular exercise. Exercise also helps people with high blood pressure, balance problems, or difficulty walking. And, during this season, any exercise helps burn calories when we tend to eat more than usual.

Some Easy Exercises for Strengthening and Maintaining Balance

✓ **Strengthen** the big muscles around the thighs, arms, shoulders, and back. Try working out with resistance bands or climb stairs to build your leg muscles.

✓ **Stand on one foot behind a sturdy chair:** holding on for balance. Hold position for up to 10 seconds. Repeat 10-15 times. Repeat 10-15 times with other leg. Repeat 10-15 more times with each leg.

✓ **Balance Walk:** Raise arms to sides, shoulder height. Choose a spot ahead of you and focus on it to keep you steady as you walk. Walk in a straight line with one foot in front of the other. As you walk, lift your back leg. Pause for 1 second before stepping forward. Repeat for 20 steps, alternating legs.

✓ **Tai Chi:** regular tai chi classes improves balance and flexibility

✓ **Endurance exercises:** (aerobic) increases your breathing and heart rate. These kinds of activities include brisk walking, dancing, jogging, swimming, biking and climbing stairs or hills.

Best Wishes for a Happy Holiday Season!



Be sure to discuss your activity level with your Health Care Provider before you start a new routine.