

## Posture and Balance Exercises Workshop Guide

### Starter Activity - Test Your Balance!

Follow the instructions below to test your balance and see how you compare to others in your age group. Use your phone, watch or a clock to record your time. You may want a partner to help you record your balance time.

How to perform the single-leg balance test:

1. Stand upright with your feet together.
  - Remain safe while performing the test; have a stable object like your chair nearby so you can grab it if you start to feel unsteady.
2. Lift one foot off the ground. Do not allow your legs to touch (this may give you extra stability). Keep your hands on your hips.
3. Watch a clock or your watch or phone to see how many seconds you are able to stand on one foot and record this number.

How long were you able to stand on one leg? \_\_\_\_\_

The following is a list of norms for single leg stance time. The times represent the average time in seconds that people, within a particular age group, can balance on one leg.

**Table: Single Leg Stance – Age Matched Norms (University of Delaware)**

Age in years	Average time in seconds
20-29	30.0
30-39	30.0
40-49	29.7
50-59	29.4
60-69	22.5
70-79	14.2

**What is your current exercise routine to improve your balance?**

### **Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines**

To achieve health benefits, adults aged 18-64 should:

- accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more
- perform muscle and bone-strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week
- 65 years and older:
- as above + physical activities to enhance balance and prevent falls

### **Exercise for Bone Health**

Osteoporosis Canada recommends:

- at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more - weight-bearing is better
- muscle and bone-strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week
- physical activities to enhance balance and prevent falls daily
- practice spine sparing strategies and good posture daily

## Why Should I Do Balance Exercises?

Balance training will

- help prevent falls
- help you keep your balance while you do your day to day activities
- improve your stability when you step or reach
- allow you to practice reactions when your balance becomes upset


## When Exercising

Remember to...


- wear comfortable, supportive footwear
- be aware that muscle soreness after exercise is normal
- use a firm, stable chair for support
- learn to perform the exercise with proper technique
- control the speed of your movement

## Posture Exercises

### What does good posture look like?

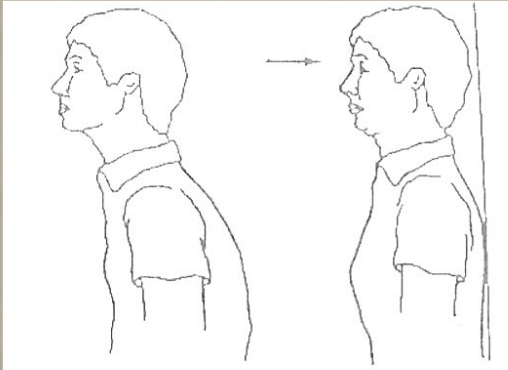


- from the side - ear, shoulder, hip and foot are in alignment
- how?
  - imagine that you are 2 inches taller
  - imagine your collar bones are wings - spread your wings
  - find the top of your pelvis and your lower ribs - lengthen the space between them



18

## Chin Tuck



3 reps, hold for 5 seconds, daily

- This exercise can be done standing with your back against a wall or sitting using a head rest
- Tuck your chin slightly toward your chest
- Feel the back of your neck lengthening
- Keep your jaw and eyes level
- Hold for 5 seconds and then relax



19

## Improving Your Posture - unloading



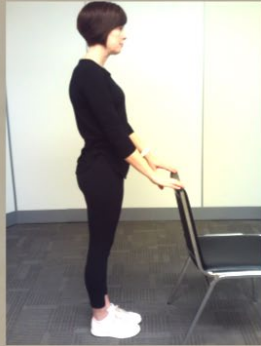
- lie on the floor without a pillow or towel under your head if you can comfortably
- if you need to tip your head back for it to reach the floor then place a folded towel or small pillow under your head
- lie with your arms, palms up, away from your body
- imagine your collar bones are wings - spread your wings without pulling your shoulders back
- 5-10 minutes/day



20

## Static Balance Exercises

### Balance Training - Static Stance



- stand upright, holding a chair for support if needed
- adjust so that 50% of your weight is on each foot
- then try:
  - shifting your weight between your heels and toes
  - shifting your weight from side to side
  - close your eyes
  - challenge your brain by counting backwards from 100 by 7s



22

### Static Stance Progressions



- stand upright, holding a chair for support if needed
- A. semi-tandem - toes of one foot beside the heel of the other foot
- B. tandem - toes of one foot directly behind the heel of the other foot
- C. single-leg



23

## Dynamic Balance Exercises

### Dynamic Balance Exercises

- walk on toes
- walk on heels
- walk heel-to-toe
- figure 8s
- walk backwards
- 3-dimensional movement - dancing, Tai Chi



25

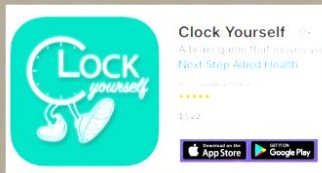
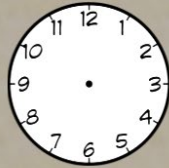
### Progressions for Balance Training

There is no end to how you can challenge your balance. Here are some ideas:

- move from more support to less support - holding a chair to not holding a chair
- from a wide base of support to a narrow base - 2 feet to 1 foot
- from a stable to an unstable surface - floor to foam/mat/pillow
- reduce feedback - close eyes
- multi-task - hold/carry a glass of water
- challenge your brain - count backwards by 7s from 100

# Reaction Time Training

Train yourself to think more quickly on your feet and react quickly



## Clock Stepping Exercise

- Imagine a clock on the floor and you are standing in the middle of it
- Take a step in the direction of each number of the clock.
- you can move:
  - clockwise
  - counterclockwise
  - mix up the numbers



## Planning and Goal Setting

Consider the following questions and write down your ideas in the space below.

These are the first steps towards creating a plan for your bone health.

- How do you want to continue with safe movement and bone health exercise?
- How will you take action to benefit from the information you have learned?
- What goals will help you stay motivated?

## How do I set goals?

Fill in the blanks below with the appropriate keyword.

Setting SMART goals helps you make clear, successful changes.

\_\_\_\_\_

what do you want to do? how much will you do? when will you do it? how often?

\_\_\_\_\_

what will it look like to achieve your goal? how will you keep track of your progress and measure your success?

\_\_\_\_\_

set yourself up for success, sometimes it is better to start small to build momentum

\_\_\_\_\_ does your goal fit into your everyday life? can you take the actions needed to meet your goal in the midst of your daily commitments, responsibilities and level of support?

\_\_\_\_\_ when will you meet your goal?

### **Cool-down Activity**

Review your current exercise routine for improving your balance, as recorded in the Starter Activity.

Consider the following questions and record your responses below.

- What changes do you need to make to your daily routine?
- How can you make these changes?
- Which areas should you focus on first?

Once you have completed the above, create a SMART goal for improving your exercise routine that you can work towards over the next week.