

Fall Prevention

Falls are common in people 65 and older. Some falls can be very serious, requiring medical treatment and could affect their level of independence.

What could prevent falls?

Environmental improvements

- Wear appropriate footwear. Wear close toed shoes with a nonslip rubber sole.
- Be careful on slippery surfaces, especially in the bathroom and kitchen. If possible, change the bathtub for a shower or install a bath seat or stool in the bathtub.
- Avoid tripping: eliminate rugs, organize loose cables, set aside troublesome furniture.
- Avoid going up ladders.
- Have better lighting.
- Schedule an eye exam regularly.

Improving your physique

Muscle strength

The leg and trunk muscles are fundamental in keeping us standing and secure in our movements. Below we suggest some exercises. Repeat them various times throughout the day and gradually you will feel more secure and strong:

- 1) Sit in a chair with your back well supported in it, lift one leg until you feel your thigh muscles (quadriceps) working. Maintain this position for 6 seconds and then relax.



- 2) Standing up, supporting yourself with a chair or table, flex the knees a little, hold this position for 6 seconds.
- 3) Standing up, holding on to the back of a chair or table, lift one leg to the side about 40-45 degrees. Hold this position for about 6 seconds.

- 4) Standing up and holding on to a chair or table, stand on your toes and hold for 6 seconds.
- 5) Also, you can exercise by standing up and sitting down in a chair several times.



Balance and gait

If you do not have a neurological disorder that requires specialized care by a healthcare professional, such as a physiotherapist, you can do the following exercises. Keep in mind the progression of the exercises, if you can complete the first and second exercises well, then you can move on to the third and fourth ones.

- 1) Stand upright and support yourself with the back of a chair or table. With one foot on the ground, move the other foot back, bending at your knee. Maintain this position for 6 seconds.



- 2) In the same position as the previous exercise, move the same foot to the front without it touching the floor. Hold this position for 6 seconds.
- 3) While holding on to the wall, walk in a straight line with your feet going heel to toe.
- 4) When your balance is steady and you're able to walk well, take small steps as if drawing a figure 8 on the floor. Repeat this movement several times.

Cardiovascular Exercise

It's good to combine strength training and balance exercises with some moderate exercise, like walking, Nordic walking, swimming, stationary cycling, tai chi, etc.

