

Lifemark's Community Outreach Program

Falls Prevention Program Review

Introduction to Falls

- A fall is defined as a sudden, uncontrolled descent that is often caused by a loss of balance
- Falls can occur following a slip, trip, a loss of balance, with confusion or a dizzy spell
- Falls can happen to anyone, but seniors are most at risk of having a fall
 - 1/3 seniors in Canada will have a least 1 fall per year
- Falls can lead to soft tissue injuries and/or fractures, which can result in pain and a loss of mobility, or worse, even death
- Falls can lead to changes in an individual's ability to perform their daily activities, which results in decreased sense of self-worth and depression
- Falls can lead to a fear of falling, which can actually perpetuate one's fall risk
- Fall related injuries are a huge burden on the health care system due to increased hospital and nursing home admissions

Fall Risk Factors

- Risk factors are variables that increase your risk of a disease/outcome
- Risk factors can be modifiable or non-modifiable
- They can be environmental (characteristics of the environment influence your risk) or personal (characteristics about one self that influences their risk)

Environmental Fall Risk Factors: slipping or tripping hazards in the home, yard, or community

- **Bathroom Hazards:** slippery/wet floors, low toilet seats, showers that are difficult to get into
- **Solution:** non-slip mats, grab bars, shower caddy, raised toilet seats and bath benches
- **Kitchen Hazards:** slippery/wet floors, cupboards and shelves that are difficult to reach, standing/kneeling on counters
- **Solution:** reorganize cupboards so everything is at arm's reach and shoulder height to hip height, have a sturdy step stool with a handle
- **Bedroom Hazards:** Clutter, electrical wires, poor lighting, long bed sheets
- **Solution:** night lights, remove clutter, bedside commode and no long bed sheets or skirts
- **Living Room Hazards:** stairs that are poorly kept, no railings, area rugs, rugs with curled edges
- **Solution:** Clear clutter, remove rugs, hand rails for added safety
- **Outdoor Hazards:** Ice/snow, stairs without railings, uneven sidewalks, poorly kept grass and yards
- **Solution:** clear ice/snow with salt/sand, keep yard tidy



Personal Fall Risk Factors: weakness, poor balance, dizziness, fatigue, poor nutrition/hydration, medical conditions, medications, poor vision and personal behaviours

- **Risks:** Physical declines associated with aging and a sedentary lifestyle include: loss of muscle strength, reduced flexibility and poor balance
- **Solution:** Exercise!
 - Your body responds to exercise by building bigger and stronger muscles by improving strength and stability to contribute to improved balance and by maintaining or improving muscle length and joint flexibility
- **Resistance Exercise:** improve muscle strength
 - Exercises where you move your muscle through a range of motion while working against an external resistance
- **Stretching Exercises:** improve flexibility
 - Exercises that lengthen or stretch your muscle
- **Balance training:** improves balance and stability
 - Exercises that challenge your body to maintain an upright posture over its base of support



Exercises on the teleconference

- **Marching** on the spot.
- **Side steps:** step the right leg out and then back to center, repeat on left leg.
- **Knee extension:** “kick” the right leg out to straighten the leg working the quadriceps or upper thigh, then lower. Repeat on other leg.
- **Shoulder Exercises:** roll shoulders in both directions + shoulder shrugs
- **Monolateral March:** Same side of the body lifts, right arm, right leg, switch to the left.
- **Hand Exercises:** Roll the wrists both directions, open and close hand + play the piano.
- **Punches:** one arm at a time or alternating.
- **Stir the Pot:** clasp the hands together and make a large stirring motion.
- **Shoulder press:** hands to your shoulders, then press the hands up, then pull back down
- **Bicep Curls:** Keep the elbows at the sides. Bend/flex the elbow, then lower down.
- **Shoulder Flexion and Abduction:** Lift arms forward to shoulder height, then open the arms wide to make the shape of the letter “T.”
- **Shoulder ext. rotation:** keep your elbows at your sides in a 90 deg. bend. Open the arms out to the side, squeezing your shoulder blades together.
- **Side steps:** step the right leg out and then back to center, repeat on left leg.
- **Foot Rocker:** lift the heels, lower, then lift the toes.
- **Sit to Stand:** lean forward, put your weight in your heels, use your chair, walker or legs for support and stand up, slowly lower yourself back into your chair
- **Standing March:** march on the spot holding onto your chair for support
- **Standing Side Tap:** holding chair, shift your weight into one foot and tap the toe out to the side.
- **Mini Squat:** open the legs wider, heels down, toes relaxed. Inhale as you lower into a squat, with your hips back and down as you bend your knees. Exhale push through the heels to stand up.
- **Calf Raise:** Stand with your feet hip distance apart, lift the heels up while holding onto your chair.
- **Single Leg Balance:** stand on one foot, holding onto the chair.
- **Step Touch:** Step the right leg to the right, bring the left leg towards the right to bring the legs together. Step to the left, feet together and repeat.
- **Ankle rolls:** circle the ankles in both directions.
- **Hamstring stretch:** straighten one leg, heel down, toes up, and then reach down the leg until you feel tension in the back of the thigh. Repeat on other leg.
- **Side stretch:** reach the right hand up towards the sky, keeping your spine straight, lean to the left, repeat on the other side.
- **Cat/cow:** hands on the knees, inhale lift the chest and look up to the ceiling, exhale and bring the chin to the chest and lean back.
- **Spinal Rotation:** cross the arms over the chest and twist to one side, hold, and then repeat on the other side.
- **Chest stretch:** open the arms wide lifting the chest up to the sky.
- **Neck Rotation:** look over your shoulder
- **Neck side flexion:** bring the right ear to the right shoulder. Repeat on the other side.