



COMMUNITY

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Fall Prevention Program



These materials are made possible with a grant from:

**The Central Illinois
Agency on Aging, Inc.**

Falling is Complicated

It can be caused by hazards:

- Obstacles in your path
- Loose Rugs
- Poorly fitting shoes
- Inadequate lighting
- Thick carpeting
- Water or ice where you are walking



◀ **The Right Way**



The Wrong Way ▶

It can be caused by health-related factors:

- Vision Problems
- Hearing Problems
- Dizziness or inner ear problems
- Weakness of muscles
- Osteoarthritis
- Stroke or cardiac problems
- Medications and their interactions

Falling can result from the things we do and the choices we make:

- Not using canes or walkers, or not using them properly
- Inattention, especially on stairs
- Wearing high heels or restrictive clothing
- Not turning on lights when entering a room
- Unsafe choices (standing on a chair to reach something, wearing slick soles when it's icy)
- Alcohol use

You can prevent a fall with exercise!

Numerous studies have shown that no matter what your age, you can benefit from exercise! In fact, a regular exercise program can help reduce the risk of falling, because exercise:

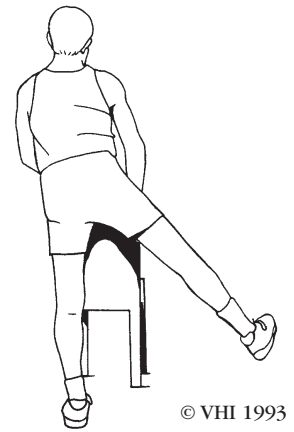
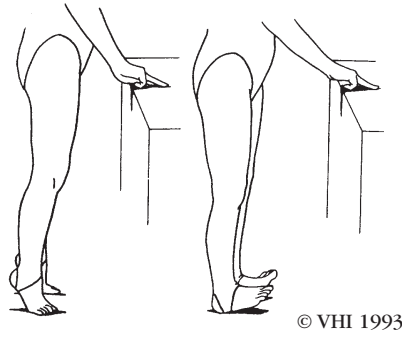
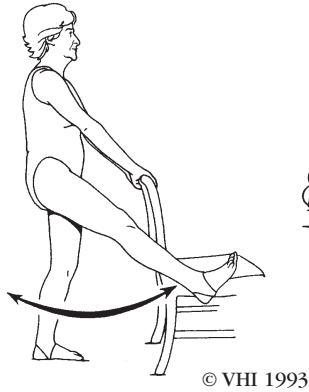
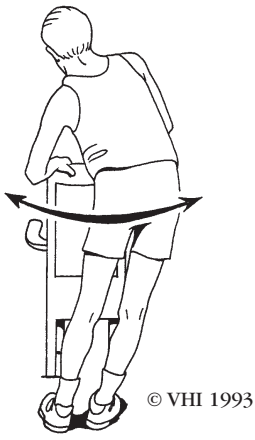
- Increases your muscle strength
- Helps keep your mind clear
- Maintains your bones
- Helps your heart work more efficiently
- May help with blood pressure and glucose problems

Before you start any exercise program, check with your doctor.

Remember to start slowly, then build up the frequency of your exercise. Make sure you breathe during your exercises, and warm up and cool down with gentle stretches. If you feel very stiff, try exercising after a warm bath or shower, since warm muscles stretch more readily. Don't exercise for an hour after any meal or before nap or bedtime — it may keep you awake.

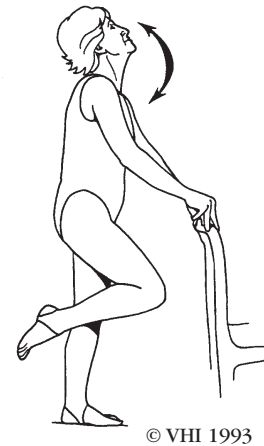
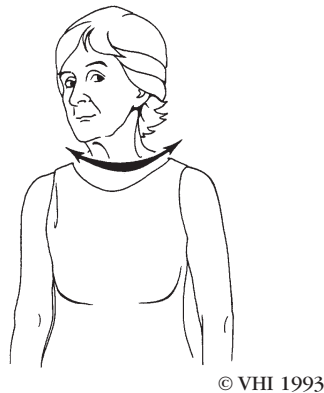
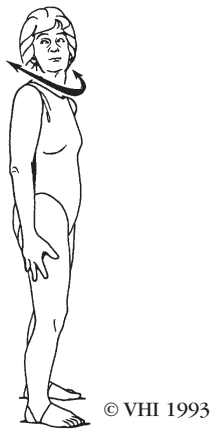
Try the exercises on the following page, holding on to a sturdy chair for balance; and remember to breathe.





Balance

1. Holding on, lean body weight from side to side.
2. Swing leg forward and back. Repeat with other leg.
3. Gently rise up on toes and roll back on heels.
4. Kick right leg out to side. Bring back to center and repeat with left leg.



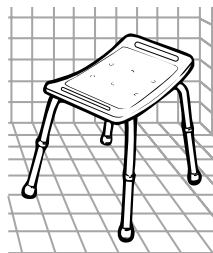
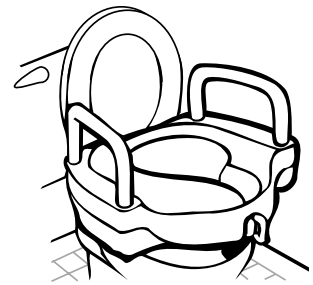
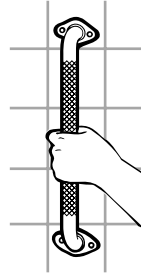
Dizziness

1. Standing, look as far as possible to both sides. Try to keep balance.
2. Stand and look at a stationary object. Keep eyes fixed on object and turn head from left to right.
3. Standing on one leg and holding on, tilt head to left and then right. Try to keep balance.
4. Standing on one leg, try to look up and back down.

Assistive Devices

There are several devices to help you with your activities of daily living. Ask your doctor or a home health therapist which ones might be best for you.

- Grab bars
- Walker
- Bath/shower safety bench
- 3 or 4 pronged cane
- Elevated toilet seat
- Hand Held Shower
- Reacher



The Wrong Way ▶

◀ **The Right Way**



What can I do to prevent a fall?

- **Talk to your doctor**, especially if you have fallen in the past year. Your doctor can do a simple balance test and make sure your medication levels are appropriate.

If you have any of the health-related conditions mentioned earlier (vision or hearing problems, dizziness etc.) your doctor should know. Any change in your overall health, even the flu or a urinary tract infection, can make you more likely to fall.

- **Exercise!** Studies have shown all seniors benefit from regular exercise — from those who are active to those who are in wheelchairs at nursing homes. Regular exercise reduces your risk of falling by improving your strength, your flexibility and your stamina.
- **Look for hazards** by going from room to room of your home. Take a friend or family member or a notepad and pencil. Look around for hazards and make a note of each one. Pretend you're inspecting a good friend's home to make it safer for them — you'll see things you might not notice otherwise!
- If you think you have a balance problem don't ignore it! Talk to your doctor or call IPMR at (309) 692-8110.

Important Phone Numbers

Emergency 911

YOUR DOCTOR PHONE NUMBER

HOSPITAL PHONE NUMBER

FIRE DEPARTMENT PHONE NUMBER

POLICE DEPARTMENT PHONE NUMBER

IPMR BALANCE PROGRAM (309) 692-8110



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