

STAY ON YOUR FEET

Move

Improve

Remove



613-966-5500

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HASTINGS PRINCE EDWARD
Public Health

Most Falls are Preventable

To help prevent falls, follow these three steps so you can keep your independence and continue to enjoy the fun things in life.

Move Your Body

Improve Your Health

Remove Hazards



Move Your Body

Good balance and strong leg muscles prevent falls.

You use your strength and balance daily for everyday activities such as walking or getting out of chairs. Trips can happen, but strong leg muscles and good balance can help you correct yourself and stay on your feet. You can lose your balance and strength as you get older, but you don't have to.

Build your balance.

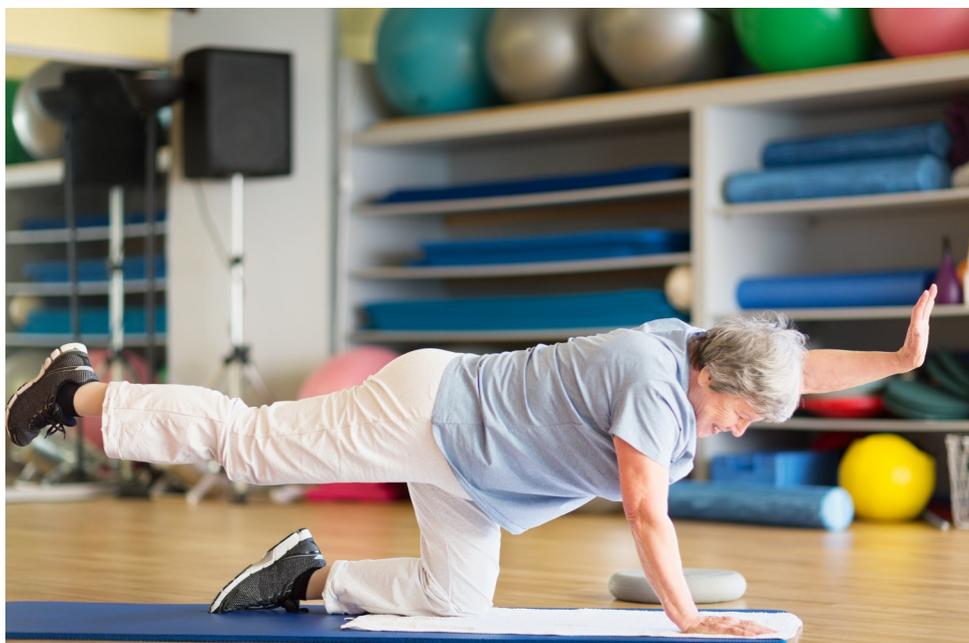
Choose activities such as tai chi or sports that challenge balance. Practice these activities often each week.

If you have trouble with walking or your balance, speak to your health care provider. You may benefit from having a physiotherapist or other professional suggest activities geared to your needs.



Strengthen Your Legs

Each week, participate in activities that will strengthen your leg muscles. For example, you can do strength and resistance training. You can also strengthen your muscles with daily activities, such as climbing stairs or digging in the garden. Both group exercise classes or a home-based program can be effective.



For Safety and Success

Before starting any new activities, speak to your health care provider. They can help you find out which activities are best for you. Try safe activities that challenge you and improve your strength. Choose activities you enjoy. Get the support of others to keep active. It's never too late to be active!

Improve Your Health



Looking after your health and well-being is important at any age. It can help you stay independent and get the most out of life! Be aware of your body and mind. If you notice any changes, such as feeling dizzy or experiencing pain, please contact your health care provider. Be sure to check with your health care provider if you feel drowsy or depressed.

Check Your Medications

Manage your medications to stay healthy and enjoy life.

- It is important to know what medications you are taking, why you are taking them, and their risks and side effects.
- Keep a record of all your medications. Include over-the-counter medications, vitamins and herbal remedies.
- Review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist, regularly.
- Some medications increase your risk of falling. For example, those taken for sleep or drugs that affect mood. Ask if your health care provider can lower your medication dose. Check if the medication can be removed or replaced.
- Alcohol can interact with some medications when they are taken together. Avoid using alcohol when taking medications.
- Follow new Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health.
- No risk results with 0 standard drinks per week
- Low risk alcohol consumption is 1 to 2 standard drinks per week
- Moderate risk alcohol consumption is 3 to 6 standard drinks per week
- High risk alcohol consumption is 7 or more standard drinks per week



Fuel Your Body

Eat well to feel and look your best.

A healthy eating pattern will give you the nutrition you need to keep healthy and independent as you age. Choose a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and protein foods, each day.

Your body changes as you age. It is

important to keep a balance between eating well and being active.



Certain nutrients, like vitamin D and calcium, become more important as we age. They keep bones strong and healthy.

- Choose a variety of calcium-rich foods in your meals and snacks. These include milk, cheese, unsweetened fortified soy beverages, and yogurt. Spinach, canned fish with bones, tofu, and navy beans are also good sources of calcium.
- Include foods rich in vitamin D, such as milk and salmon, in your meals and snacks each day. Health Canada recommends that adults over 50 should also take a daily vitamin D supplement of 400 IU to meet their needs.

As we age, we lose muscle strength.

- Include protein-rich foods at each meal to keep muscles and bones healthy. Legumes, tofu, poultry, eggs, fish and dairy products, and lean meats are protein-rich.

Getting enough vitamin B12 can help reduce fatigue and help you to think clearly and concentrate. Some older adults may not absorb vitamin B12 very well.

- All adults over 50 need to include foods that are fortified with B12, or take a supplement.

Keep Hydrated

Drinking fluids throughout the day can keep you hydrated. Not getting enough fluids in your day can lead to dizziness, fainting and low blood pressure.

- Make water your drink of choice.

Enjoy Your Food

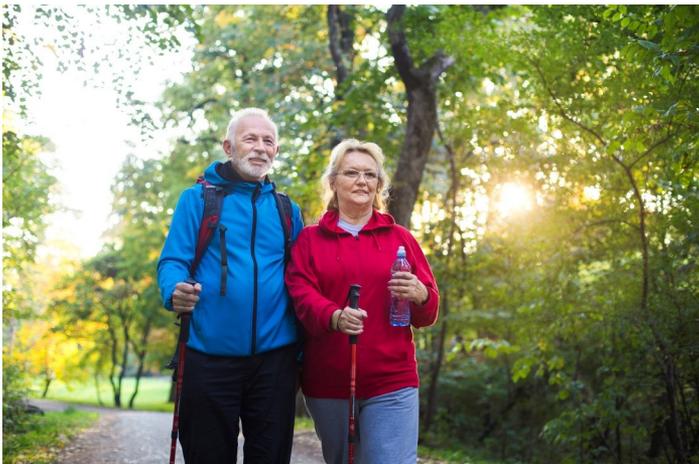
Healthy eating is more than the food you eat. It is also about how you eat.

- Choose a variety of foods that you enjoy.
- Eat your meals with others as often as you can.

Keep Food Safe to Stay Healthy

As the body ages, it may be harder for it to fight off sicknesses caused by contaminated food.

- Wash your hands before and after preparing a meal. Use soap and rub your hands for 20 seconds before rinsing.
- Refrigerate leftovers within two hours and use within 2-3 days.



Keep Your Social World Healthy

Keep connected and stay social.

Keeping connected and staying social is vital to healthy aging. There are many ways to do this.

- Try to maintain or strengthen ties to your family and friends. Share meals and social visits with others often.
- Enjoy a range of activities with people of different ages.
- Join a community or faith group.
- Attend group physical activity programs to suit your interests and needs.
- Volunteer in your community. You have knowledge and skills to offer! Volunteering can help you feel connected and add meaning to your life.



Remove Hazards

As your body gets older, changes will occur. Feel confident that you can adapt to those changes and make your home safer so that you can keep enjoying life.

Make Your Home Safer

Make your home safer by removing fall hazards, both inside and out.

- Remove rugs, mats, slippery tiles and objects on the floor.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Move your furniture to create larger walkways.
- Keep everyday objects in easy-to-reach areas.
- Ensure non-slip surfaces are on showers and bathtubs.
- Clear ice and snow from outdoor steps and walkways.



Speak to your health care provider about the need for assistive equipment. That could include grab bars, a raised toilet seat or other equipment around your home. Canes, walkers or other assistive devices help you keep active and doing things that matter most to you.

Let someone know whenever you have a fall. Follow up with your health care provider.



Check Your Eyesight

As we age, changes to vision will occur, but this does not have to lead to vision loss.

- Have your eyes checked and tested by an optometrist every year to help reduce the effects of changing vision like cataracts or watery eyes.
- Ask about the safest use of your multi-focal eyewear, especially when you are active and outdoors.
- Ensure your home is well lit and turn lights on as necessary.
- Use night lights in areas where you walk at night, such as the bathroom and halls.



Take Care of Your Feet



Care for your feet and wear safe footwear, indoors and out. This will keep you comfortable and on the move. Seek treatment from a podiatrist for foot problems, including foot pain, as soon as possible.

What is Safe Footwear?

- Select shoes with good grip that are flat and fit securely.
- Choose shoes with closed heels.
- Look for shoes with broad, flat heels: they will increase tread and help your feet grip the ground.
- Avoid walking in socks.
- Wear ice-grippers on your outdoor footwear when walking in snowy/icy conditions. For safety, do not use them on indoor surfaces.





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For more information on fall prevention visit hpePublicHealth.ca or call our Healthy Life Line at 613-966-5500 ext. 610.

To request this document in an alternate format, call 613-966-5500; TTY: 711 or visit hpePublicHealth.ca.

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