

How To Reduce Fall Risks

More than one third of adults over age 65 and older fall each year. Among people 75 and older, those who fall are four to five times more likely to be admitted to a long-term care facility for at least one year. And as much as we'd love to see you at one of our campuses, we'd prefer you remain healthy and just stop by for a visit sometime!

So here's the deal - seniors can reduce their risk of falling through regular physical activity. Exercise improves our ability to perform the tasks of daily living, which allows us to maintain mobility and independence. Improving strength through exercise also increases bone density and reduces the risk of injury due to falls.

We know it's hard to get motivated to exercise on a regular basis. In fact, most seniors are not involved in enough physical activity. The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) cites that only 30 percent of Americans aged 45-64 exercise routinely and a mere 32 percent of those aged 65 and older claimed to exercise regularly.

How can we improve these numbers? Just remember, exercising doesn't have to be a chore. When considering an exercise program, consider the activities you enjoy most.

Walking is an excellent form of exercise and doesn't require a membership to a gym or expensive equipment. Simply lace up your shoes

and get moving! Walking provides lower extremity weight bearing exercise while also improving your cardiovascular system. The key is to start out slow, perhaps only 10 minutes per day, three to four days a week, and steadily increase your workout until you reach a minimum of 30 minutes per day, three to four days a week.

Dancing can be a fun way to get into the groove of working out. You can even enlist a partner, as exercising with a partner can improve your success rate!

Yoga is a terrific activity that improves flexibility, strength and balance. There are many fun and informative DVDs available, and many YMCAs or local fitness centers offer Senior Yoga classes.

Swimming and water walking are other great exercises that provide a low-impact workout and enhance strength and flexibility while improving cardiovascular health.

Before beginning a new exercise routine or activity, be sure to ask your doctor if it is safe for you to perform. The goal is to remain healthy and prevent falls after all! And whatever you choose to do, start slow, grab a partner and have fun!