

Preventing Falls is Serious Business!

Why should you be concerned about preventing falls? In active people over 65 who fall and break a hip, more than half never return to their previous level of activity. Falls are the number one cause of accidental death in adults over 65 years of age.

What Causes Falls?

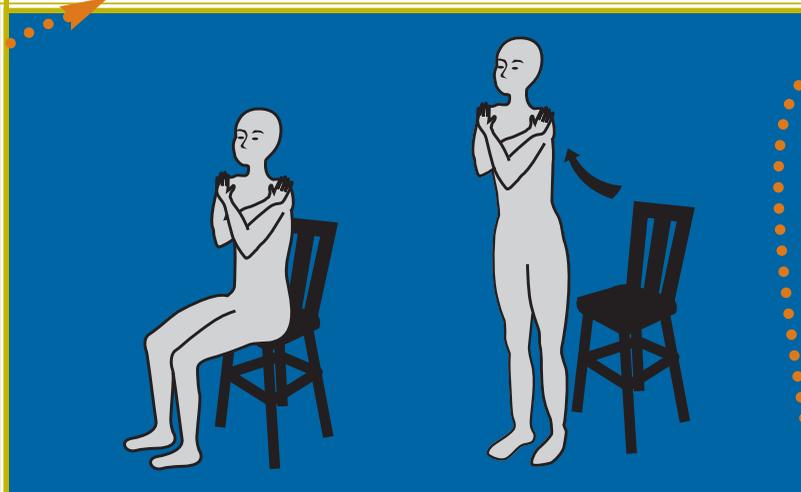
There are many reasons why people fall – many are preventable. Sometimes medical problems or medications can cause falls. Other times, people can fall rushing to the bathroom, or tripping over cords or throw rugs. Balance problems or muscle weakness can also lead to falls.

Am I at Risk of Falling?

1. Have you fallen in the past year?
2. Are you afraid that you might fall?
3. Do you frequently need to use your arms to rise from chairs?

* Answering YES to any of these questions indicates that you may be at risk for falling. If you are at risk, or you are concerned about taking the sit to stand physical test, proceed directly to the action steps to reduce your risk.

Take This Test to Determine Your Risk of Falling



For this test you will need:

- A straight-backed chair
- A stopwatch or clock with a second hand

What to do:

- 1 Sit in the middle of the chair with your feet flat on the floor and your arms folded across your chest
- 2 Time yourself or have someone else time you doing the following:
- 3 Rise to a full stand and return to a complete sitting position. Repeat as many times as you are able in 30 seconds. If you are on your way up when time is up, count that as one. Check the appropriate box on the next page.

Record Your Fall Risk Score

- 8 or less times = **High Risk**
- 9 to 12 times = **Moderate Risk**
- 13 or more times = **Low Risk**

Based upon Your Risk Level,
Take the Following Steps to
Reduce Your Risk of Falling

HIGH RISK Consult your doctor or physical therapist for advice & instruction to improve your strength. Do the exercises in this brochure only if you feel safe doing them on your own.

MODERATE RISK Do the exercises in this brochure. Seek assistance from your doctor or physical therapist if you have difficulty doing the exercises on your own.

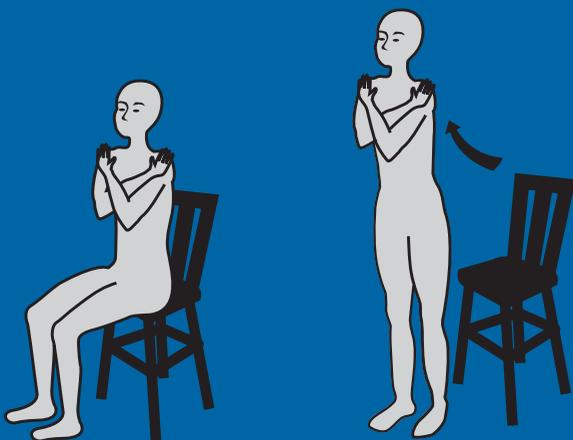
LOW RISK Do the exercises in this brochure to keep your risk low!

Reassess your risk level every three months to keep track of your progress.

DATES
CHECKED:

SIT TO STAND

A great exercise for strengthening thighs & buttocks.
Do three to five times each week.



1 Sit in a straight back chair with your feet shoulder-width apart. Count to four as you SLOWLY rise up to a standing position.

** If this exercise is too difficult, start by using your hands for support. Using your hands will still build your strength.*

2 Pause. SLOWLY lower yourself towards the chair as you bend your knees to the count of four.

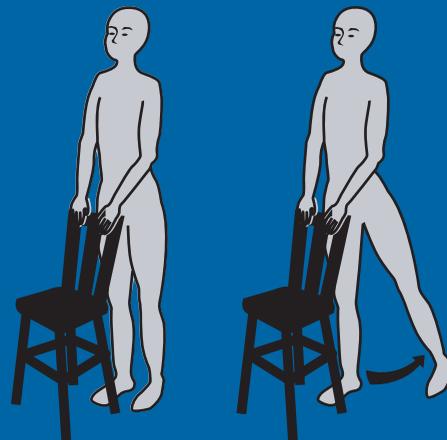
3 Repeat 10 times. Rest for one minute. Complete a second set of 10.

** If this is too difficult, start at a lower number and build up to 10.*

** Note: If you can't sit all the way down, or, if you feel pain or discomfort, place a cushion on the chair or squat down only four to six inches.*

SIDE HIP RAISE

The side hip raise targets the muscles of your hips and thighs.
Do three to five times each week.



1 Stand behind a sturdy chair with feet slightly apart and toes facing forward. Keep your legs straight. Place both hands on the back of the chair for support.

2 SLOWLY lift your left leg out to the side as you count to four. Keep your leg straight. (Only a small amount of movement is necessary).

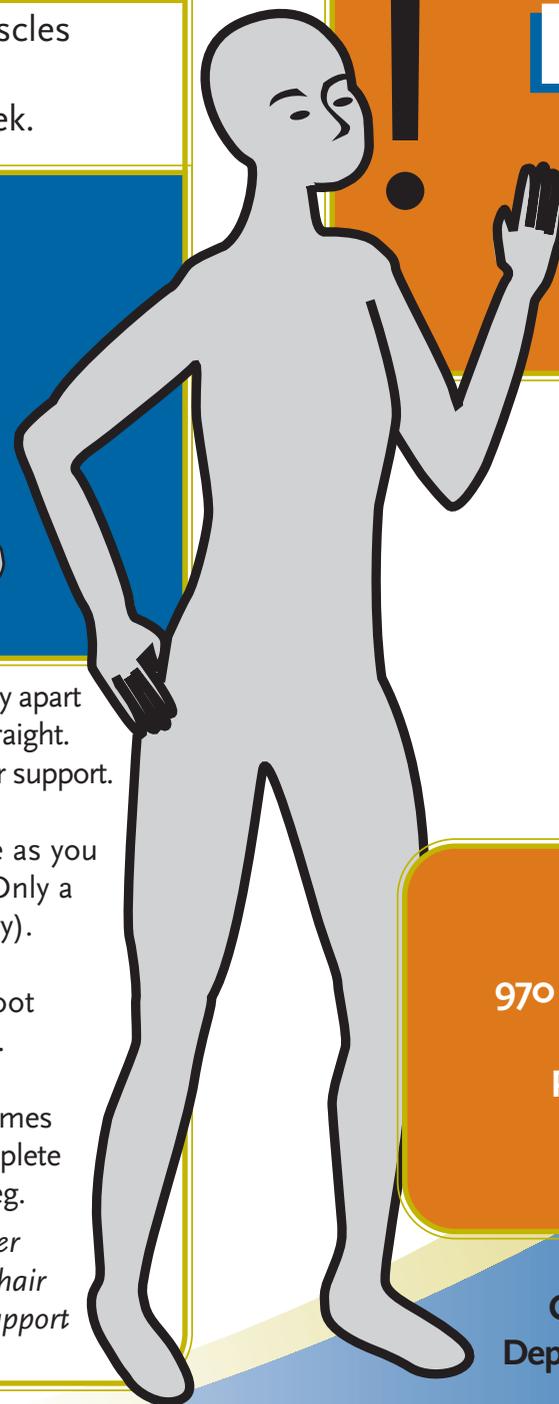
3 Pause. Then, SLOWLY lower your left foot back to the ground to the count of four.

4 Repeat 10 times with the left leg and 10 times with the right leg. Rest for 1 minute. Complete a second set of 10 repetitions with each leg.

** Note: As you become stronger, you can further increase your strength by holding on to the chair with only one hand. Progress to one finger support as you are able.*

Stand Up & Be Strong

Reduce Your Risk of Falling



 **APTA**
American Physical Therapy Association
The Science of Healing. The Art of Caring.
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Co-Sponsored by the MN
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