



POWER UP YOUR HEALTH

ALBERTA HEALTHY LIVING PROGRAM- CALGARY ZONE NEWSLETTER



Live your Best Life

Fall into good habits

Falling is the leading cause of injury in Alberta, and it can happen at any age. Although the risk of falling increases with age, it is not considered a normal part of aging. The problem is, a fall can be debilitating, and injuries that result from a fall can greatly impact your quality of life.

One solution shared with us is that the best way to prevent a fall was to tie a whole bunch of helium balloons to yourself to hold you up. According to our calculations, however, this would mean you would need 5,833 balloons to hold up a 175 lb person at a time. Fortunately, there are other, more cost-effective ways to lessen your risk of having a fall.

As we start to see more snow in the horizon, let's look at a few things that you can do this winter to lessen your risk of falling:

1. Learn from the penguins. Practice [walking like a penguin](#) to lessen your risk of slipping on ice.
2. [Choose stable footwear](#).
3. Check your vision and keep a well-lit environment.
4. Review any side-effects associated with any medications that you're taking, such as dizziness or drowsiness.
5. Remove scatter rugs and clutter. Look into anti-slip mats and grab bars for your bathtub.
6. Practice healthy sleep habits.
7. Stay active, and work on your strength and balance.

Questions? Join us for these free classes and workshops to learn more about preventing falls:

- [Better Choices, Better Health® - Chronic Disease](#) – Tuesday, November 5, 12, 19, 26, December 3 & 10 from 1 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. over Zoom
- [Steady on Your Feet](#) – Tuesday, November 19 and 28 from 1 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. over Zoom
- [Getting Up and Down from the Floor Safely](#) – Wednesday, November 27 from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. over Zoom

Learn more about the classes and services available to you by visiting ahs.ca/ahlp.



Let's Get Moving

Keep calm and balance on.

Imagine this. You went to your favourite café and ordered a \$6.00 specialty drink. You leave the building, and trip over the uneven sidewalk, or slip on a sneaky sheet of black ice that you did not notice on your way back to the car. Your drink goes flying, and your hip is throbbing. Could this have been prevented?

Most falls are preventable, and there are things you can do to lessen your risk of falling. For example, practicing balance and lower body strength exercises can help improve your reaction time so that you can recover from a slip or trip and stay on your feet. Strength exercises also help improve your bone density, making your bones stronger and more resilient should you fall.

Our free [supervised exercise program](#) can guide you in developing an exercise plan to help keep yourself on your feet. [Watch this video](#) to learn about what you can access through our supervised exercise program and how it has impacted past participants.

This service is only available to residents in the [Calgary Zone](#). If you live in the Calgary Zone and would like to learn more or register, call 1-844-527-1160. If you do not live in the Calgary Zone and are looking for exercise services, visit ahs.ca/ahlp to find exercise services available in your area.



Eating well with osteoporosis

Next time you're at the grocery store, take a walk down the cereal aisle and look at a box of honeycomb cereal. This is what the inside of your bones look like underneath a microscope. As we get older, our bone density starts to decline. In the case of somebody with osteoporosis, the walls of the honeycomb get thinner, and the spaces get larger. The result? Brittle bones that can fracture more easily. In addition to strength training (resistance) exercises, nutrition plays a critical role in slowing bone loss. Let's look at two of these key players in more detail:

- 1- **Calcium:** Bone is a living tissue. It is also a calcium reservoir, and your body will take calcium from this reservoir if you are not taking in enough calcium through your diet. Your body requires calcium to allow for muscle contraction, maintain a regular heartbeat, and support nerve function. Some foods that contain calcium are milk, hard cheese, and calcium-fortified soy, almond and rice beverages.
- 2- **Vitamin D:** This vitamin helps our body absorb calcium. Our skin creates vitamin D when it interacts with sunlight; however, in Canada, we are unable to make enough vitamin D between October and March by sun alone. As such, to ensure that you are getting enough vitamin D in your diet, it is recommended that all Canadians take a vitamin D supplement. Fortified milks (cow or plant) are also available.

Magnesium, vitamin K, and protein also have important roles in building bone and reducing the risk of fractures. While our next [Osteoporosis and Bone Health](#) class will not be available until April 2025, our [Eating Well for Good Health](#) class (offered Tuesday, November 19, from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. over Zoom) can guide you on general healthy eating guidelines and reading food labels. If you have questions about exercising with osteoporosis, join our [Staying Active & Exercising with Osteoporosis](#) class on Thursday, November 21 from 10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. over Zoom.

No pain ... no gain ...

"...is so untrue (unless you are an athlete in training). As a matter of fact, it's quite the opposite. This is just one of the many truths I learned and experienced while taking a fitness class through the Alberta Healthy Living Program (AHLP). Through the program, I also gained an appreciation for exercise, both mentally and physically. As a person who was born with a physical disability and then suffering a mild stroke, exercise and I have had a love-hate relationship; mostly hate. However, it is because of these challenges that a referral was put into the AHLP. My challenges being what they are, it was suggested that I give the Gentle Fitness class a try. At first, I was quite ambivalent about starting, as I was worried that it would prove to be difficult. I couldn't have been more wrong.

Having three physical therapists and/or kinesiologists on board instructing and supervising every exercise was invaluable. Education and guidance (which included adaptation and modifications) are just two components that make this program the success that it is. I have gained physical strengths that improved my quality of life. I am so grateful to the medical professionals in my life who have recommended this program to me. I can honestly say my attitude towards exercise has changed, especially since I now know that "no pain" is the true objective to exercise." ~ Julia

