



KEEPING **WELL** for older adults



in partnership with

To order visit www.findingbalancealberta.ca, phone 1-780-492-6019, or email info@findingbalancealberta.ca

Helpful Phone Contacts

211 Alberta - Call 211, text INFO to 211 or live chat for community information, resources and support.

Addiction Helpline - 1-866-332-2322

Alberta Seniors Benefit and the Alberta Supports Contact Centre - 1-877-644-9992

Crisis Text Line - Text CONNECT to 741741

Elder & Family Abuse - Family Violence Info Line 310-1818

Dementia Advice - Call 811

Finding Balance Falls Prevention (IPC) - 1-780-492-6019

Fire Prevention - Contact your local fire department

Fraud and Scamming - Report to your local police or call Service Canada for more information. 1-800-622-6232

Home Care - A Registered Nurse can provide you with resources and support available in your community including healthcare needs, assessments and referrals.

- North 1-855-371-4122
- Edmonton 780-496-1300
- Central 1-855-371-4122
- Calgary 403-943-1920 or 1-888-943-1920
- South
 - Bow Island 403-545-2296
 - Brooks 403-501-3244
 - Lethbridge and Area 403-388-6380 or 1-866-388-6380
 - Medicine Hat 403-581-5750
 - Oyen 403-664-3651

Meals on Wheels - Contact your local program for daily or frozen meals or to volunteer.

Mental Health Helpline - 1-877-303-2642

MyHealth.Alberta.ca - Healthlink call 811

Poison & Drug Information Service (PADIS) - 1-800-332-1414

Rehab Line - The Rehabilitation Advice Line 1-833-379-0563

Seniors' Centre Without Walls - 780-395-2626



My Contacts

Doctor: _____

Optometrist: _____

Pharmacy: _____

This booklet was created to help older Albertans keep well, active and connected to lower their risk of falling.

A fall can have a significant impact on the lifestyle and independence of an older adult.

Falls are the leading cause of injury among seniors in Alberta. Every year 1 in 3 older Albertans will fall. *Finding Balance* is an education program and public awareness campaign designed to educate and empower older Albertans to stay independent and prevent falls. The falls prevention program and campaign is developed and led by the Injury Prevention Centre, School of Public Health, University of Alberta in partnership with seniors groups, health care organizations, and practitioners from across Alberta.

Resources can be ordered and/or downloaded at www.findingbalancealberta.ca.

Phone: **1-780-492-6019**

Email: info@findingbalancealberta.ca

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Mind Your Mental Health

As you age, you may notice changes in your health, social connections, and daily routines that can affect your quality of life, mood and well-being. The good news is that there are practical ways to support mental and physical well-being.

Maintain positive connections and get involved in your community:

- Make time for your family and friends, and neighbours.
- Connect with coworkers, faith communities, clubs or support groups in your community who share similar interests or values.
- Consider volunteering or finding new activities or hobbies.

Recognize changes in your mood and seek support:

- Understand how your emotions affect the way you think or act.
- Say what you feel. Talking about how you feel, or your emotions, isn't a sign of weakness: it's about taking charge of your wellbeing.
- Seek support from family, friends, or professionals.

Handle challenges, stress or difficult situations:

- Learn new ways to adapt to challenges, problems, stress and other difficult situations.
- Challenges are often a part of daily life.
- Recognize and lean on the helpful supports in your life.
- Know you are not alone.

Who to talk to:

- Friends and family.
- A person who promises confidentiality, such as a counselor, therapist or subject expert.

If you need more support:

Dial 2-1-1: Seniors information line will direct callers to appropriate programs and services in the community.

- Alberta Mental Health Help Line:
1-877-303-2642 or call **811**
- Alberta Addictions Helpline:
1-866-332-2322
- Distress Line (Edmonton and area):
 - Toll free Northern Alberta:
1-800-232-7288
 - Crisis 24 hours Edmonton:
780-482-HELP (4357)
 - Seniors Abuse Helpline:
780-454-8888 Crisis 24 hours
- Distress Centre (Calgary and area):
 - Main Crisis Line: **403-266-HELP (4357)**
- Distress and Suicide Prevention Line of Southwestern Alberta
 - Toll Free: **1-888-787-2880**
 - Crisis 24 hours for Lethbridge and area
403-327-7905
- First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line:
1-855-242-3310
- Rural Distress Line:
1-800-232-7288
- If you or someone you love is at risk, **call 911**



Being Active at Home

People with strong legs and good balance are less likely to fall.

Being active is safe for the majority of people and it has many benefits for your health and well being:

- Strength and balance exercises help to keep you strong and steady on your feet.
- Throughout the day, break up periods of inactivity, such as sitting or lying down, with small movement breaks to help increase energy.
- Movements that warm you up and get you breathing slightly harder help keep you fit and well.



Quick safety check before exercising

There are some steps you can take to reduce the chance of problems occurring:

- Speak to your healthcare provider before exercising.
- Prepare your exercise space by clearing away unnecessary clutter.
- Use a sturdy chair or kitchen counter for support and balance.
- Have a glass of water ready to sip as you exercise.
- Wear well fitting and supportive non-slip shoes.
- Wear loose clothing.
- If you are exercising on your own, keep a telephone nearby, just in case you need it.

Set the pace: always warm up and start exercising at a level you find easy. Build up gradually.

It is normal to feel a bit stiff for a few days after exercising the muscles you have used more than usual. This is common and shows that your body is responding to the increased movement.

Try not to hold your breath as you exercise; breathe normally throughout.

Set a goal of reaching at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week.

Benefits to Being Active

Many people notice that they are not as mobile as they age and that their joints and muscles feel stiff.

As you age, the risk of having a fall increases. It is important to keep active and improve your strength and balance. Keeping your legs strong and maintaining good balance is the best way to reduce your chances of having a fall.

Being active every day helps to:

- Improve mood and sense of well-being.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Have a good appetite.
- Stay at a healthy weight.
- Keep your bowels healthy.
- Keep muscles and bones strong.
- Reduce the risk of other health conditions.
- Increase your energy.
- Improve your balance.
- Reduce your risk of falling.

No matter what your abilities are today, you can improve your strength and balance.

Take Action

- Do activities you enjoy!
- Try to do 30 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous activity at least 5 times per week.
 - Moderate intensity: you will sweat and breathe harder
 - Vigorous intensity: you will sweat and be out of breath
- Walk, dance, garden, swim or bike.
- Supervised group programs can help you learn exercises such as tai chi or yoga.

If you experience severe pain anywhere or dizziness, stop and rest.

The movements included on the next few pages of the booklet will help build your strength, balance and flexibility. This helps you to do your daily activities such as grocery shopping, gardening, meeting friends and family, volunteering, and other things you enjoy.



Building Strength and Challenging Your Balance

When you...

Challenge
Your
Balance

Build
Strength

Be
Active

...you can enjoy benefits like:

People with strong legs and good balance are less likely to fall. Explore new activities:

Living Independently



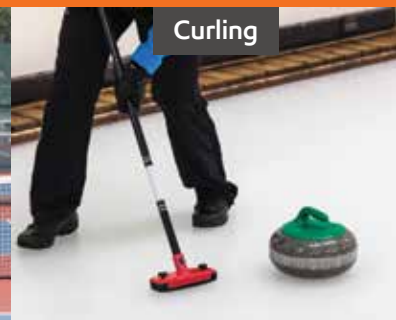
Gardening or Yardwork



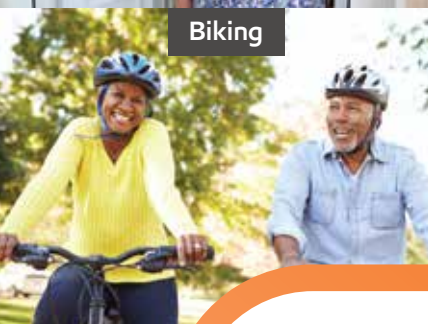
Pickleball



Curling



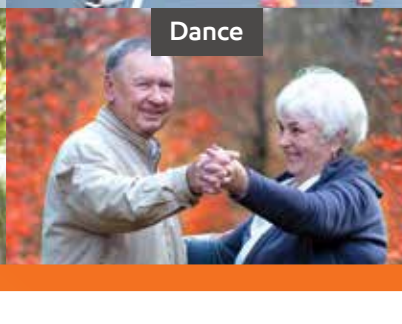
Biking



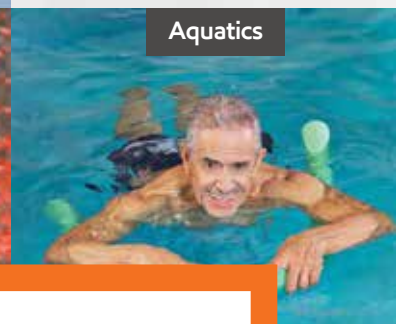
Playing with Grandchildren



Dance



Aquatics



Focus on your ABCs

- Alignment
- Breathing
- Control

Think about your body alignment, posture, and engaging your core as you exercise.

- Breathe throughout all exercises.

- Perform slow and controlled movements.
- Start with a few repetitions and increase as you progress.
- Hold balance exercises for 10 -15 seconds per side.
- Modify to suit your abilities. Everyone is different.
- Ensure you move at your own pace/speed/ability.

Warm Up Movements

Make sure that you are near a sturdy and stable counter, and that any chairs used will not move. Wear comfortable clothes and supportive footwear.

Seated March -

Warms muscles and prepares for movement.

- Sit tall at the front of the chair
- Hold the sides of the chair
- March with control
- Build to a rhythm that feels comfortable
- Continue for 1-2 minutes



Foot Alphabet -

Loosens ankles, improves heel-to-toe walking action, keeps you stable.

- Sit tall at the front of the chair
- Hold the sides of the chair
- Place the heel of one foot on the floor then lift it and put the toes down on the same spot
- Repeat five times on each leg. Increase pace and time to 1-2 minutes



Shoulder Roll -

Warms muscles and prepares for movement.

- Stand tall with arms at your sides
- Lift both shoulders up to ears, draw them back then press them down
- Repeat slowly five times and feel the shoulder joints loosen



Side to Side Rotation -

Loosens spine, helps looking over shoulders, turning in bed.

- Sit very tall with feet hip-width apart
- Place your right hand on your left knee and hold the chair back with your left hand
- Twist the upper body and head slowly to the right, back to the middle, and round to the left
- Repeat five more times slowly each way



Seated Movements

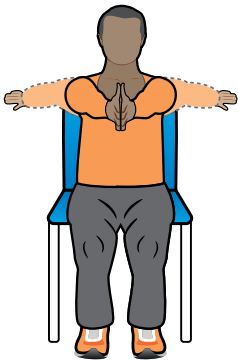
Make sure that you are near a sturdy and stable counter, and that any chairs used will not move. Wear comfortable clothes and supportive footwear.



Wrist Strengtheners - Improves grip strength, helps with opening jars.

- Fold or roll a hand or tea towel into a tube shape
- Sit tall then squeeze the towel tightly with both hands, hold for a slow count of 5 then release
- Repeat this exercise 6-8 times

More challenging option: Squeeze then twist your towel before holding for 10 seconds.



Arm Swings - Helps with stamina and endurance.

- Sit tall away from the chair back
- Place both feet flat on the floor below knees
- Bend elbows and swing arms from the shoulder
- Build to a rhythm that is comfortable
- Continue for 30 seconds

More challenging option: Increase pace and time to 1-2 minutes.



Front Knee Strengtheners -

Strengthens the knee for walking and bending.

- Sit back in the chair, back supported and feet under knees
- Brush one foot forward along the floor then lift the ankle slowly and straighten (do not lock) the knee
- Lower the foot with control

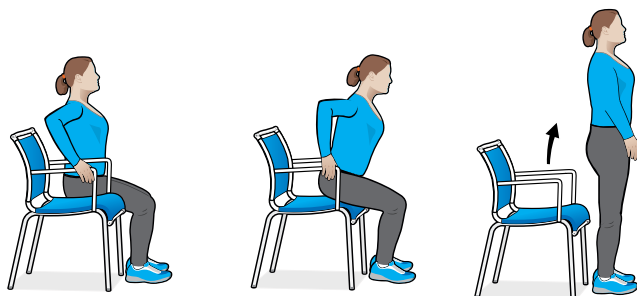
- Aim to lift for a slow count of three and lower for a slow count of five each time
- Repeat 10 times on one leg then switch legs

More challenging option: Sit away from the back of the chair so more of your leg is off the chair when you lift. Keep the back strong while you lift the leg.

Strength and Balance Exercises 1-3

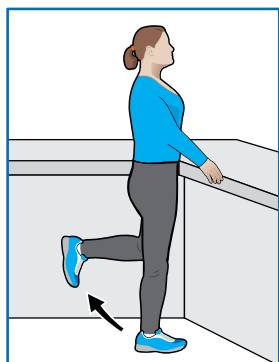
Make sure that you are near a sturdy and stable counter, and that any chairs used will not move. Wear comfortable clothes and supportive footwear.

Order your Strength and Balance Poster at:
www.findingbalance.ca/resources-for-order/
or call 780-492-6019



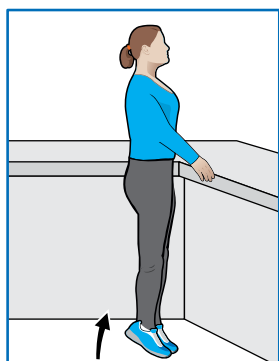
Sit to Stand -

- Sit in your chair
- Start with feet hip width apart
- Place hands firmly on the arms of the chair
- Use upper body to assist with getting up
- Lean forward, bring your nose over your toes while pushing up with your arms and legs until you are standing up
- Stand tall then sit back down
- Repeat 15 times



Standing Leg Curl -

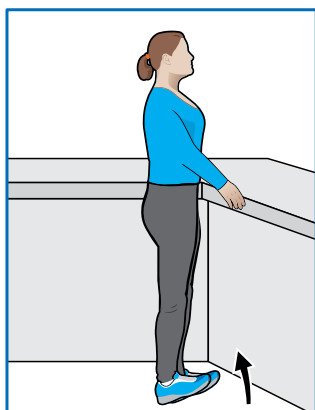
- Stand with feet hip-width apart, hold a counter for support
- Shift your weight onto one leg
- Bring the heel of your bent leg towards your buttocks as far as you are comfortable
- Lower your foot back down to starting position
- Repeat on each leg up to 15 times



Heel Raise -

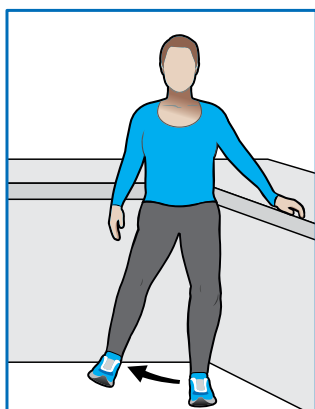
- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Hold on to counter and look forward
- Slowly raise both heels off the floor, standing on toes
- Hold for 5-10 seconds
- Return to start position
- Repeat up to 15 times

Strength and Balance Exercises 4-6



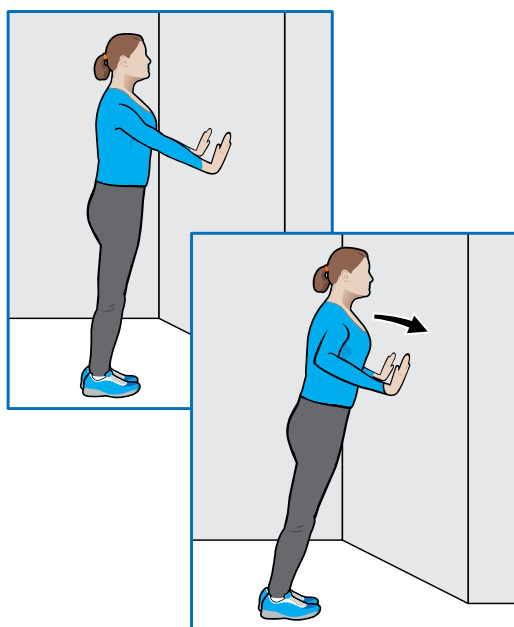
Toe Raise -

- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Hold onto counter and look forward
- Slowly raise toes off the floor, putting weight onto heels
- Hold for 5-10 seconds
- Return to start position
- Repeat up to 15 times



Side Leg Lift -

- Stand with feet together, hold a counter for support
- Shift weight onto one leg
- Raise the other leg out to the side
- Keep your back straight and tall
- Slowly return leg to the floor
- Repeat on each leg up to 15 times



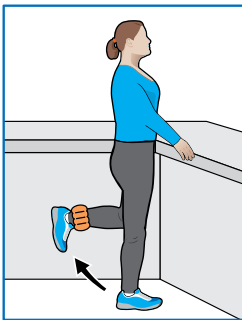
Wall Push Up -

- Facing the wall, stand arms' length away
- Place hands on the wall at shoulder height and shoulder-width apart
- Tighten the abdominal muscles
- Keeping back and legs straight, bend elbows while lowering upper body toward the wall
- Hold for 2-3 seconds
- Straighten arms pushing against the wall and return to starting position
- Keep elbows slightly bent
- Repeat up to 15 times
- Remember when getting up from this exercise to plant one leg underneath yourself to take your body weight away from your arms

More Challenging Exercises

Make sure that you are near a sturdy and stable countertop, and that any chairs used will not move. Wear comfortable clothes and supportive footwear.

Order your Strength and Balance Poster at:
www.findingbalance.ca/resources-for-order/
or call 780-492-6019



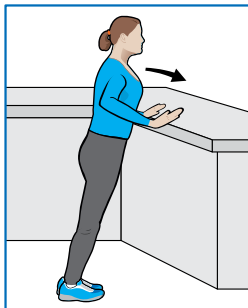
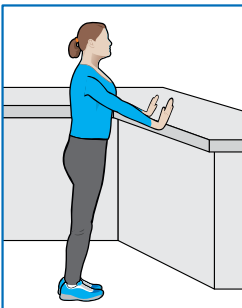
Standing Single Leg Curl With Weight -

Helps improve walking stability.

- Use ankle weight or a nylon or sock with a roll of nickles
- Tie nylon or sock around your ankle
- To perform the standing leg curl you want to start with your feet hip-width

apart and have a chair or counter in front of you for support

- Shift your weight on to one leg
- Bend your other knee to bring your heel towards your buttocks as far as you comfortable
- Keep your thigh parallel to the weight bearing leg
- Lower your foot back down to the starting position
- Repeat on each leg up to 15 times



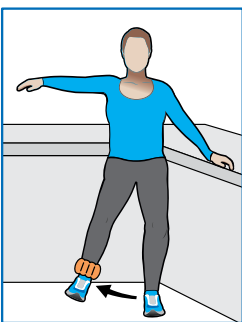
Wall Push Up With Countertop -

- Start by facing the counter
- Place hands on edge
- Adjust yourself so your body and arms are straight
- Then bend your elbows,

chest moves forward towards counter

- Straighten arms to return back to starting position
- Repeat up to 15 times

Remember when getting up from this exercise plant one leg underneath yourself to take your body weight away from your arms



Side Leg Lift With Weight Lateral Arm Raise -

- Use ankle weight or nylon sock with a roll of nickles
- Tie nylon or sock around your ankle
- Begin with your feet together while holding on to the back of a chair or counter for support

- Shift your weight on to the leg that is closest to the chair (could be done facing the counter)
- Raise both the opposite leg and arm out to the side, while standing tall
- This movement should take place at your hip/shoulder and not in your trunk
- Lift as far as you are comfortable and then return back down
- Repeat on each leg up to 15 times

Marching On The Spot -

Helps maintain bone density at the hip and spine.

- Stand to the side of the chair holding on with one hand
- Stand tall

- March on the spot swinging free arm
- Keep marching for 30 seconds
- Turn slowly around then repeat using the other arm
- Repeat three times



Resistance Band Exercises

Exercising with resistance bands is a great way to build strength in all parts of your body — legs, arms and core. Bands are portable and inexpensive. You can use them at home, outdoors or in a fitness class.



Cool Down

Use this time to quiet your mind and cool your body:

- Start your cool down with 2-3 minutes of either walking around the room or walking on the spot
- Perform the same exercises you did during warm-up for 5 minutes
- Move your muscles:
 - ☐ Rise up on your toes then your heels
 - ☐ Squat half way down or sit to stand
 - ☐ Do arm circles and wall push-ups
- Add stretching to your cool down
- Always cool down after exercise and before you sit down or stand still for lengths of time.

Order the
Band Exercises Booklet from:
[www.findingbalancealberta.ca/
resources-for-order/](http://www.findingbalancealberta.ca/resources-for-order/)
or call 1-780-492-6019.

**When you are cooling
down, it's important to:**

- Move slower
- Lower heart rate
- Breathe

Vision

Clear vision is critical to preventing falls.

Ensuring your eyeglass prescription is correct is a good first step in fall prevention, but your eye health is equally important.

Your optometrist can help!

Did you know...

- You'll benefit from early intervention. Many eye diseases have no early symptoms such as cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration, a tear in the retina, bleeding and tumours, but your optometrist can detect these changes and begin timely treatment to help preserve your vision.
- Your optometrist can see early signs of medical conditions, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Your optometrist and physician will work together to protect your eyes.
- Your eyes need more time to adjust to changes in light as you age. You may need to increase lighting.
- We can lose depth perception which makes it harder to judge the height and depth of stairs and curbs.
- We become more sensitive to glare, so it's important to use sunglasses year-round.
- Some medications can cause blurred or double vision.

There is no better time to focus on quality vision care to preserve your eye health, an active, independent life, and the chance to enjoy all that you love!

Alberta Health coverage is available towards your annual eye exam for Albertans 65+.



**To find an optometrist, just enter your postal code at:
[www.optometrists.ab.ca/
findanoptometrist](http://www.optometrists.ab.ca/findanoptometrist)**

**Alberta
Association
of Optometrists** 

Eating Well As You Age

Nutrition is an important part of healthy aging. Healthy eating can:

- Give you the energy you need to do the things you enjoy.
- Prevent muscle and bone loss to reduce the risk of falling or breaking bones.
- Prevent, lower the risk, or slow progression of chronic diseases.

**Sip water throughout
the day to stay hydrated.
Hydration promotes
balance and reduces falls.**

A balanced diet includes a variety of foods you enjoy. Using the “Healthy Plate” from Canada’s food guide can help you include all the nutrients you need to stay active and strong.

1. Include a protein food like meat, fish, beans, lentils, eggs, nuts, seeds, dairy, or tofu with every meal to keep your muscles healthy.
2. Eat plenty of fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables.
3. Choose whole grain options. Whole grain breads, pastas, and crackers are higher in fiber which can promote a healthy heart and support bowel regularity.
4. Drink plenty of fluids, about 6-8 cups throughout the day. Hydration is important for energy, concentration, and mood.

It’s important to eat regularly during the day to stay energized. Plan 3 meals and 1-2 snacks evenly spaced throughout your day to fuel your body and mind.

Including variety in your diet helps you get all the nutrients you need and can make mealtime more interesting:

- Keep a variety of vegetables and fruit washed and ready to go. Frozen options come pre-cut and pre-washed and are just as nutritious as fresh!
- Stock easy-to-prepare proteins like nut butters, toasted chickpeas, canned tuna, or pre-cooked hard-boiled eggs to add protein to meals and snacks.
- Try mixing water with frozen fruit, sliced cucumber, or fresh herbs like mint to make water more exciting.

**Protein options include both
animal and plant sources.
Include a protein food with
every meal.**

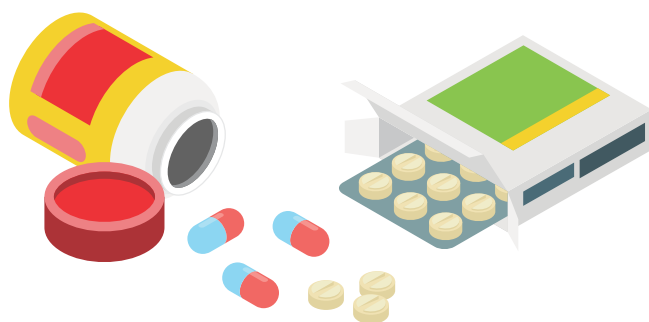


**Speak to your healthcare provider, Registered Dietitian,
or call Health Link at 811 if you have questions about nutrition.**

Medication

Your health needs may change as you age. You may take more than one medication, vitamin, or supplement to stay healthy. It is important to review all your medications with your doctor or pharmacist.

Medication may increase your risk of falling if it makes you sleepy, dizzy, weak or confused or if you go to the washroom more often.



The more medications you are on, the higher your risk of falling. Taking more than 5 drugs can increase your risk of a fall by 75%.

Questions to ask your pharmacist about your medications:

- What is the medication used for?
- Will it cause dizziness or drowsiness as a side effect?
- Will it cause blurred or double vision?
- What should I do if I have side effects?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- Should I avoid alcohol or other foods and beverages?

Remember:

- Always follow the instructions and doses when taking medications.
- Use only one pharmacy to fill your prescriptions.
- Keep a current medication list in your wallet and at home.
- Do not share prescription medications.
- Ask your pharmacist about pill packs.



DO NOT stop taking your medications without talking to your healthcare provider.



DO talk to your doctor or pharmacist about your medications, symptoms, and potential to experience falls. They can assess you and your medications and determine the best plan of action.

As you age, your body's ability to remove medications decreases.

This can lead to more side effects.



Important questions to consider with your healthcare provider:

- Is this medication **needed**?
- Does it align with my **goals**?
- Is there a **better option**?

Alcohol and Health

As you age, your body becomes more sensitive to alcohol. Your age, your body weight, and other health conditions will impact how you respond to alcohol.

Alcohol can cause you to fall due to:

- Impaired gait, coordination and balance and a slower reaction time, loss of muscle strength.
- Reduced vision and hearing.
- Reduced cognitive function, increased confusion and forgetfulness.
- Drowsiness and unsteadiness (especially when combined with medications).
- Negatively impacting other health conditions such as high blood pressure, osteoporosis, diabetes, congestive heart failure, cancer (at least seven types), stroke, liver problems, malnutrition and mental illness and brain damage.

Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health (2023) provides Canadians with the information to make well-informed and responsible

decisions about drinking alcohol. The key message is that, "when it comes to drinking alcohol: Less is better."¹

Since the Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines were published, many studies worldwide have reviewed the effects of alcohol. They showed that **any** alcohol use has some level of risk.

One standard drink is 13.45 g of pure alcohol, which equals:

A bottle of beer

(12 oz., 341 ml, 5% alcohol)

A bottle of cider

(12 oz., 341 ml, 5% alcohol)

A glass of wine

(5 oz., 142 ml, 12% alcohol)

A shot glass of spirits

(1.5 oz., 43 ml, 40% alcohol)

**Drinking alcohol has negative consequences.
The more alcohol you drink per week, the more the consequences add up.**

0 drinks per week

No risk

2 standard drinks or less per week

Low risk

3–6 standard drinks per week — your risk of developing several types of cancer, including breast and colon cancer, increases.

Moderate risk

7 standard drinks or more per week — your risk of heart disease or stroke increases.

Each additional standard drink — greatly increases the risk of alcohol-related consequences.

**Increasingly
high risk**

¹ Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health - Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines
<https://www.ccsa.ca/canadas-guidance-alcohol-and-health>

Spot the Hazard Home Safety Checklist

Over half of all falls happen in the home due to hazards that are often overlooked but important to fix.

Steady on the stairs

- ☐ Have at least one railing the entire length of the stairs.
- ☐ Use railings and walk slowly up and down stairs.

Consult a healthcare provider for adaptive equipment that can help you age in place. If you use a mobility device, make sure it is in good condition and is fitted to you.

Create a trip-free home

- ☐ Remove throw rugs or use non-slip mats.
- ☐ Keep pathways clear. Remove clutter from your floor and stairs.
- ☐ Add a rubber, non-slip bath mat inside and outside the tub and shower.
- ☐ Install grab bars near the tub, shower, and toilet.
- ☐ Clean up spills. Make sure floors are dry.
- ☐ Increase lighting in dim or dark areas. Add nightlights.
- ☐ Move furniture so you can reach all light switches and lamps.
- ☐ Keep your phone and items you use often within reach.
- ☐ Ensure furniture is stable. Repair or replace broken furniture.
- ☐ Run electrical cords along walls and behind furniture.

Sample photographs from the Spot the Hazard Home Safety Checklist¹:

Contact
info@findingbalancealberta.ca
or call 780-492-6019 for
the Spot the Hazard Home
Safety Checklist.

¹This tool has been adapted with permission from the Home Safety Self Assessment Tool version 5 international.



How To Get Up

If you have a fall:

- Lie still a minute.
- Stay calm.
- Check yourself for injuries.
- If you are not injured, use a sturdy piece of furniture to get up.
- If you are injured, call for help.

After a fall, talk to your doctor or a family member to lower your risk of falling again.

1

Roll onto your side, and then push up onto your elbows.



2

Use your arms to push yourself onto your hands and knees.



3

Crawl towards a very stable piece of furniture (a sturdy chair or bed) and hold onto it for support.



4

Slide or raise the foot of your stronger leg forwards so it's flat on the floor.



5

Lean forward and push up using your arms and front leg. Slowly rise to a standing position.



6

Turn around and sit down. Sit for a minute or two and catch your breath.



Footwear & Foot Care Tips for Older Adults

As you age, taking care of your feet and wearing proper footwear are important to help prevent falls. Feet that are healthy and pain-free can help you keep your balance.

Proper Foot Care

- ☐ Wash your feet in warm water.
- ☐ Dry your feet completely after washing, especially between your toes.
- ☐ Trim your toenails straight across and not too short.
- ☐ When sitting, put your feet up on a stool to decrease swelling.
- ☐ Check your feet often for corns, open sores, redness, dry skin, and thickened nails. Ask for help or use a mirror to see your feet.

Proper Footwear

- ☐ Wear supportive footwear inside and outside your home.
- ☐ Avoid walking in bare feet, stockings, or floppy slippers with an open heel.
- ☐ Wear shoes that allow room for your feet to swell.
- ☐ Buy shoes with laces or Velcro® closures to ensure a proper fit.
- ☐ Wear shoes with a non-slip tread.
- ☐ Add ice grips to your footwear in the winter, and wear winter boots that will grip snow and ice.



**Talk to your
healthcare provider or
doctor if you feel pain
or notice any changes
in your feet.**



Tips to Walk Safely in Winter

When walking on snow and ice:

- Take your time and avoid rushing.
- Wear shoes or boots with a wide, flat heel.
- Choose footwear with soles that stay flexible in the cold.
- Make sure footwear has the proper amount of grip - not too much and not too little.
- Wear ice grips over your shoes or boots to get better grip. Remove ice grips when indoors because they can be slippery.
- If you use a cane, put a retractable ice pick on the end of it.
- Carry a small bag or container of sand to sprinkle on icy spots you cannot avoid.
- Keep your hands free for gripping handrails or supports.

Sunlight and snow can be challenging during winter months:

- In bright light or at night, it can be hard to see.
- Walking surfaces can be icy, slippery or sloped. Loose snow can also hide the condition of the surface.
- Snow can also affect hearing because it might muffle sounds like approaching vehicles.
- Be sure to wear sunglasses all year.



Walk Like a Penguin

- Bend slightly and walk flat footed.
- Point your feet out slightly like a penguin.
- Keep your centre of gravity over your feet as much as possible.
- Watch where you are stepping.
- Take shorter, shuffle-like steps.
- Keep your arms at your sides (not in your pockets!).
- Concentrate on keeping your balance.
- Go S-L-O-W-L-Y.
- Visit Alberta Health Services at: www.penguinwalk.ca



Tips for Keeping Well Checklist

Every day, set your intentions and work toward your goals:

Set a daily routine

- ☐ Get up and go to bed at a similar time each day.
- ☐ Be active, move daily!

Stay connected

- ☐ Talk to family and friends.
- ☐ Share how you feel or ask for help that you may need. Everyone needs support and reassurance and others may have similar feelings.
- ☐ Consider volunteering.

Move more throughout your day

- ☐ Try to do 30 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous activity 5 times per week.
- ☐ Get outside in the fresh air for a walk, or in the yard. Appreciate the nature around you.
- ☐ Add seated and standing activities into your daily routine around your home.
- ☐ Break up long periods of inactivity with movement.

Nutrition and Hydration

- ☐ Eat a well balanced diet including:
 - plenty of fruits and vegetables,
 - protein food (meat, fish, tofu, egg, beans, lentils and nuts) and
 - choose whole grain foods (bread, cereals, pasta or brown rice).

- ☐ Drink plenty of fluids, about 6-8 cups throughout the day.
- ☐ Stick to regular meal times. If your appetite is poor, have healthy snacks in between meals.

Do things you enjoy

- ☐ Watch a movie, read a book, or do some puzzles.
- ☐ Try to do new things each day or start a new project.
- ☐ Listen to some music.



Protect Yourself from Fraud and Scams

Fraud is the number one crime against older Albertans. Older adults are targeted by criminals more often because seniors may be more trusting and be home during the day to answer the door or phone.

Common scams include pension scams, free items or vouchers, tax rebates, tax refunds, fake competitions, investment scams, door to door scams, and free money from the government.

Protect yourself from identity theft and credit/debit card fraud:

- Report it right away! Call your bank if your wallet is lost or stolen, or the mail that you are expecting goes missing.
- Never share your Personal Identification Number (PIN) with another person.
- Shred old bills and statements.
- Keep all personal documents (birth certificate, passport or Social Insurance Number (SIN) card) in a secure place and do not carry those documents with you for your daily activities.
- Never give out your credit card, bank account, or personal information to someone over the phone, at the door, or in an email unless you can confirm the person or organization you are dealing with or you made the contact with them first. Ask for proof of identity.

Two of the most common scams are from people pretending to be credit card companies or the Canada Revenue Agency. If you get a phone call like this, hang up immediately or confirm their identity. Do not give them any information.

Protect yourself from online or email scams:

If an email looks suspicious:

- DO NOT RESPOND to that email.
- DO NOT GO to website links listed in that email.
- DO NOT CLICK on pop-up windows. Safely close the window.
- DO NOT OPEN attachments.
- Call to verify the organization or person, if possible.

Protect yourself from phone and door-to-door scams:

If you are not completely sure who has called you on the phone or is at your door, do not give them any money or information.

Your bank, the government and police will NEVER ask you for money by email or on the phone.

If you think you have been scammed, report all fraud and scams to your local police. Even if you are embarrassed or feel the amount of money is too small to worry about, you might not get your money back, but you can help stop someone else from being scammed.

Finding Balance & Alberta's Elders

The Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council (KTC) has adapted the original Finding Balance falls prevention resources developed by the Injury Prevention Centre, to produce culturally-appropriate tools for First Nation Elders in preventing falls. These resources can be used by caregivers and professionals to support Elders across Alberta in all Treaty areas. By including input from Elders, the resources and guides highlight the strength, independence, and unique needs of each area.



KTC Health Administration strives to build partnerships and relationships, internally and externally, looking for opportunities that support and improve overall health outcomes.



**KEE TAS KEE NOW
TRIBAL COUNCIL**



KEEP YOUR MOCCASINS MOVING!

Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council | www.ktcadmin.ca

For more information, visit FindingBalanceAlberta.ca



Fire Safety

A working smoke alarm is your first line of defence if there is a fire in your home.

If the alarm sounds...

- Get out and stay out.
- Never go back inside for people or pets.
 - + If you have to escape through smoke, get low and crawl under the smoke toward your exit.
- Call 911 from outside your home.

Maintain your smoke alarms.

- Test alarms each month by pressing and holding the test button.
- Replace all alarms (both electrical and battery-operated) every 10 years.
- Replace alarm batteries at least once a year.

Make sure everyone can hear the alarm.

- Strobe lights or pillow/bed shakers are also available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as for those who are heavy sleepers.

Have a home fire escape plan prepared.

- **Make a home fire escape plan.** Draw a map or blueprint of your home, showing all doors and windows. Know at least two ways out of each room, if possible.
- **Practice your home fire drill.** Be prepared before there is an emergency so everyone can get out safely.
 - + **Choose an outside meeting place** (such as a tree or lamp post) that is a safe distance from the home.

Plan your escape around your abilities.

- Place your wheelchair, cane, walker or scooter nearby for easy access.
- Prepare an emergency kit with necessary items such as medications, glasses, hearing aids, warm clothes, etc.

If you cannot escape...

- Call 911 and tell them your exact location.
- Close the door; seal the openings around the door and vents with wet bedding or wet towels.

Keep fire out of your kitchen.

Never leave cooking food unattended.

- Avoid cooking when sleepy or drowsy due to medication or alcohol.
- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen, even for a short time, turn off the stove.

Keep the kitchen clear of combustibles

- This includes curtains, dishcloths/dish towels, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper

towels, pot holders or food packaging.

Prevent burns and injuries.

- Wear clothing with short or tight sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can catch fire if it comes in contact with a gas flame or electric burner.
- Prevent accidents by turning pot handles towards the back of the stove when cooking.
- Do not store items (i.e., spices) at the back of the stove. You may be burned while reaching over hot pots and steam.

Challenge Your Brain!

Evidence shows that keeping your mind active is important for your health.

A A E R O A R O S X E C N A L A B C I V
J Q C Z C O U U T S I C A M R A H P L R
F F T T X O P T O M E T R I S T Y R R H
E G W I I V X B N W C V M C L T U Q L K
U G C Z H V R L U B L E E N A U D B X Q
Y T C F M A I J B D I D D O O B S W W Y
D F U M I U B T Q P L C I I S B K G M P
B P Y N H U X F I T H D C T O W F K O Z
H R T N N R I B L E W M A A A O A B V U
E O E O O N O T I R S Q T R E V T D E L
G T Q A I D H A G A N J I D G V E J M F
F E P T T R T D H E X E O Y U G Y Q E J
S I C V C H S Z T W T I N H N Q F D N X
R N B E E T I R I T A S C E V M P J T F
E T R M N E G N N O E T L S Z X P G E A
T X A N N S A K G O U L X L Y C R E Y J
N I I O O N E A G F A J K E I O T O L P
I F B W C L O N T H K E T E I B T V E Y
W C D M Q L T Y C S P E D P D O C T O R
A G G E E P D S L L A F S P I R G W D A

Word List:

activities	connection	grips	optometrist
balance	doctor	hydration	pharmacist
brain	falls	lighting	protein
breathing	feet	medication	sleep
challenge	footwear	movement	winter

Words can be found forwards, backwards or diagonally. Letters may be used more than once. The answer key is on page 30.

Falls Prevention Crossword



Across

1. Remove _____ from hallways and stairs to avoid tripping and falling.
5. You should speak to your _____ if you have had a fall to discuss ways to prevent falling again.
7. In the winter, wear boots that will _____ snow and ice.
8. Keep all areas well-lit and install light _____ at the top and bottom of the stairs.
10. A sign of low blood pressure could be _____ or lightheadedness which can put you at risk for a fall.
11. _____ mats should be placed inside and outside your bath and shower.
12. Hold on to _____ when going up and down the stairs.

Down

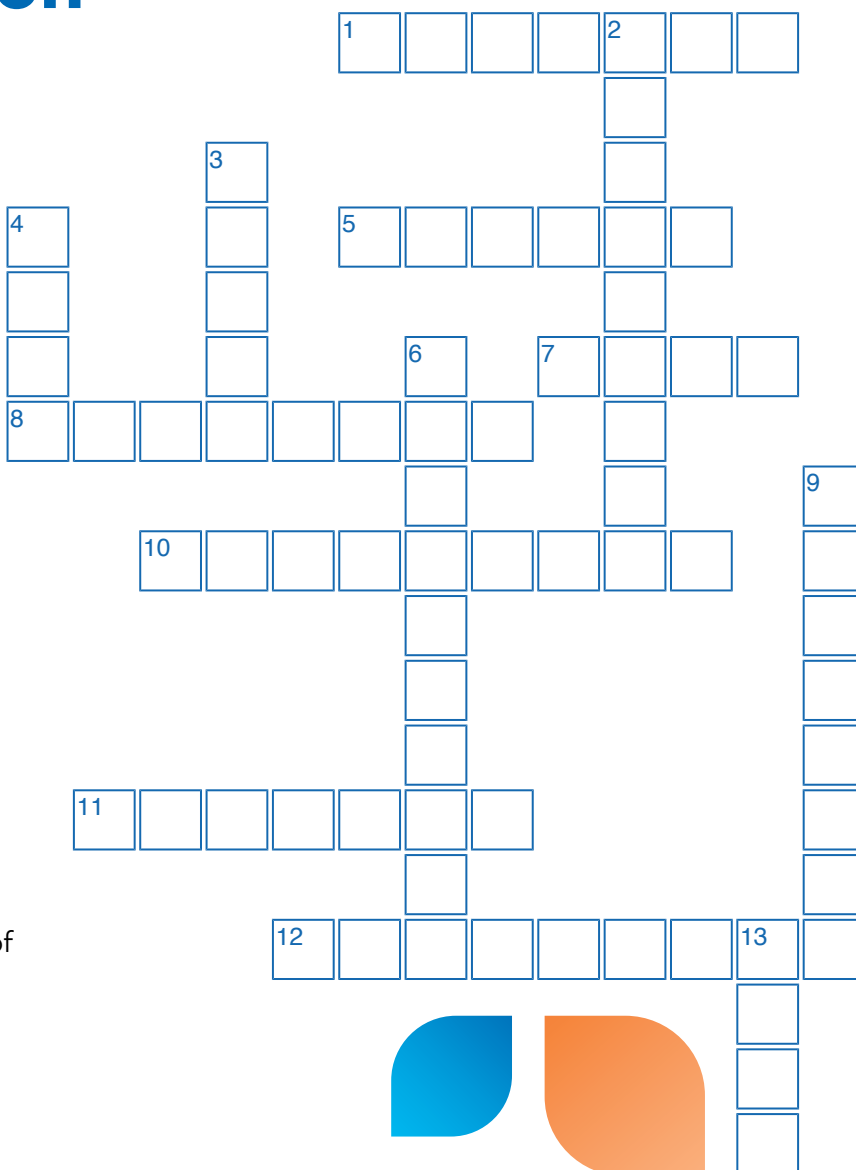
2. Remove these types of floor coverings that can cause you to trip (2 words).
3. One of the benefits of physical activity is that it keeps your _____ and lungs healthy.
4. You should have your _____ checked every year and clean your glasses daily.

6. Vitamins, herbs, natural health products and over the counter remedies should be reviewed with your doctor or pharmacist and are all considered _____.

9. Install safety _____ (2 words) by your shower, tub and toilet.

13. Keeping your _____ strong and maintaining good balance is the best way to reduce your chances of having a fall.

The answer key is on page 30.



Helpful Websites

If you do not have access to the internet ask a friend, family member, neighbour or community contact to print documents for you.

211 Alberta - <https://ab.211.ca/>

Alberta 55 Plus -
<https://alberta55plus.ca/about-us/>

Alberta Association of Optometrists -
<https://www.optometrists.ab.ca/>

Alberta Blue Cross - <http://www.ab.bluecross.ca>

Alberta Health Services -
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/>

Alberta Seniors Benefit -
<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-seniors-benefit.aspx>

Alberta Seniors Resource Guide -
<https://www.alberta.ca/seniors-resources.aspx>

BounceBack® - Free program to build skills to improve mental health -
<https://alberta.cmha.ca/bounceback/>

Canada's Food Guide -
<https://food-guide.canada.ca/>

Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health -
<https://ccsa.ca/canadas-guidance-alcohol-and-health>

Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health -
<https://ccsmh.ca/>

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) -
National - www.cmha.ca
Alberta Division - <https://alberta.cmha.ca/>

Caregivers of Alberta -
<https://www.caregiversalberta.ca/>

CORE Alberta – Collaborative Online Resources & Education – Healthy Aging -
www.corealberta.ca

Covenant Health -
<https://www.covenanthealth.ca/>

Dental and Optical Assistance for Seniors -
<https://www.alberta.ca/dental-optical-assistance-seniors.aspx>

Finding Balance – Resource Catalogue -
<https://findingbalancealberta.ca/resource-catalogue/>

Brochure Stay Independent. Prevent Falls -
<https://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/FB-Brochure-2022-1.pdf>

Everyday Exercises for Older Adults Poster -
http://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/FB_Exercise_Poster_2023_en.pdf

Exercise for Strength & Balance Poster Cards -
https://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/FB_Exercise_Cards_2023.pdf

Falls Risk Self-Assessment Checklist - Are you at Risk of a Fall? - <https://findingbalancealberta.ca/risk/>

How to Get Up from the Floor - Available in 15 different languages - <http://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/FB-How-to-Get-Up-2017-English.pdf>

Fraud and scams - Report to your local police
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/seniors/forum/fraud-scams.html>

Government of Alberta seniors health benefits -
<https://www.alberta.ca/seniors-health-benefits.aspx>

Government of Canada -
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/aging-chronic-diseases-profile-canadian-seniors-report.html>

Help Right Now - Canadian Mental Health Association Alberta Division -
<https://alberta.cmha.ca/find-help/help-right-now/>

Helpful Websites

Continued from previous page

Indigenous Wellness Core -

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth/service.aspx?Id=1069951>

Indigenous organizations and service directory -

<https://www.alberta.ca/Indigenous-organizations-and-service-directory.aspx#jumplinks-0>

Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council -

<https://keetaskeenow.ca/>

My Health Alberta -

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/>

Mobile Tools to Promote Mental Wellness (AHS) -

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/amh/if-amh-mobile-tools-mental-wellness.pdf>

Parachute Canada -

<https://www.parachute.ca/en/injury-topic/fall-prevention-for-seniors/>

Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults -

<http://csepguidelines.ca/adults-65/>

Poison and Drug Information Service (PADIS) -

<https://albertahealthservices.ca/topics/page11975.aspx>

Public Health Agency of Canada -

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/aging-seniors.html>

Scams that target Canadian consumers - Common scams -

<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/competition-bureau-canada/en/fraud-and-scams/tips-and-advice/scams-target-canadian-consumers-common-scams>

Seniors Financial Assistance application online -

<https://sfa.alberta.ca/>

Seniors Health - Alberta Health Services -

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page16426.aspx>

Seniors Home Adaptation and Repair Program (SHARP) -

<https://www.alberta.ca/seniors-home-adaptation-repair-program.aspx>

Seniors Wellness in Challenging Times (AHS) -

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-covid-19-seniors-wellness-in-challenging-times.pdf>

University of Alberta Guide to Mobility and Independence - Medically At-Risk Driver Centre (ualberta.ca)

Edmonton & Area Guide -

<https://www.ualberta.ca/medically-at-risk-driver-centre/media-library/mobility-guides/edmonton-mobility-guide-10th-edition-feb-2020.pdf>

Calgary & Area Guide -

<https://www.ualberta.ca/medically-at-risk-driver-centre/media-library/mobility-guides/calgary-mobility-guide-4th-edition-feb-2020.pdf>

Virtual Mental Health Supports -

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page17137.aspx>

Walk Like a Penguin - Winter Walking -

www.penguinwalk.ca

Puzzle Answer Keys

Challenge Your Brain! Word Search on Page 26

A A E R O A R O S X E C N A L A B C I V
 J Q C Z C O U U T S I C A M R A H P L R
 F F T T X O P T O M E T R I S T Y R R H
 E G W I I V X B N W C V M C L T U Q L K
 U G C Z H V R L U B L E E N A U D B X Q
 Y T C F M A I J B D I D D O O B S W W Y
 D F U M I U B T Q P L C I I S B K G M P
 B P Y N H U X F I T H D C T O W F K O Z
 H R T N N R I B L E W M A A A O A B V U
 E O E O O N O T I R S Q T R E V T D E L
 G T Q A I D H A G A N J I D G V E J M F
 F E P T T R T D H E X E O Y U G Y Q E J
 S I C V C H S Z T W T I N H N Q F D N X
 R N B E E T I R I T A S C E V M P J T F
 E T R M N E G N N O E T L S Z X P G E A
 T X A N N S A K G O U L X L Y C R E Y J
 N I I O O N E A G F A J K E I O T O L P
 I F B W C L O N T H K E T E I B T V E Y
 W C D M Q L T Y C S P E D P D O C T O R
 A G G E E P D S L L A F S P I R G W D A

Falls Prevention Crossword Puzzle on Page 27

ACROSS 1. Clutter 5. Doctor 7. Grip 8. Switches 10. Dizziness 11. Nonslip 12. Handrails
DOWN 2. Throw Rugs 3. Heart 4. Eyes 6. Medication 9. Grab Bars 13. Legs

Live Well. Be Active to Prevent a Fall.

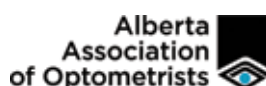
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
☐ Have you set a weekly Be Active goal?	☐ Try to include strength and balance activities on most days of the week.	☐	☐	☐ Any activity counts! Try and move for 30 minutes today!	☐	☐
☐	☐ Consider trying a new activity?	☐	☐ Stay hydrated! Drink plenty of water throughout the day.	☐	☐ Older adults need 7-8 hours of sleep every night, are you getting enough?	☐
☐ Set a goal to be active 5 times this week.	☐	☐ Have your vision checked every year for your eye health and for changes to your eyesight.	☐	☐ Plan a walk or hike with family or friends.	☐	☐ Do exercises for your leg muscles.
☐	☐ Get outside, enjoy some fresh air!	☐	☐ Practice movements that challenge your balance.	☐	☐ Review all medication with your doctor or pharmacist.	☐
☐ Set a goal to practice balance movements 5 times this week.	☐	☐ For strength, try a weight training class.	☐ For supporting resources visit www.findingbalance.alberta.ca	☐ Challenge Your Balance	☐ Build Strength	☐ Be Active



In partnership with



And special thank you to:



To order free resources or to provide feedback:

Visit: www.findingbalancealberta.ca

Email: info@findingbalancealberta.ca

Phone: 1-780-492-6019

This booklet was adapted with permission from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Ageing Hub, Keeping Well this Winter booklet.

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