



Healthy Steps In Silicon Valley



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Resources for health & fitness after 50



HEALTHTrust

Let's make Silicon Valley the healthiest region in America.

Dear Community Member:

It is my pleasure to share with you The Health Trust's *Healthy Steps* guide. The guide was designed especially to inspire and connect Silicon Valley adults 50 and older with opportunities for health, fitness, and community involvement.

As we grow older, we know firsthand that life presents many new challenges after 50. Silicon Valley, this beautiful region we call home, has many interesting and varied ways to be active—we just need good information on where to find them. This guide can help you try new activities, find new resources, and step up your motivation to good health.

Physical activity and personal involvement in the community are proven to help support lifelong health. I hope you will, like me, enjoy exploring the following pages and find what inspires you—and make it happen for yourself and perhaps for those you love.

Yours in health,

Frederick J. Ferrer
CEO

Healthy Steps in Silicon Valley is available in English and Spanish.

Healthy Steps is distributed through The Health Trust and many community partners. A list of community partners is at www.healthtrust.org. To request a single copy of the guide, please call The Health Trust at **408-559-9385**. There is a \$5 fee for shipping and handling.

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How to Use This Guide

There are many ways to use this guide. Look at the pictures, read pages that interest you, or read it back to front. These two pages can help you overcome barriers and take the first steps toward being more active and healthy in Silicon Valley.



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▲ **I know being active is good for me. But I can't find the time.**

Start by being a little more active in your daily life. See page 5 for easy activities that you can do in the middle of chores or work.

It's too late for me to be more active.

People can become more active and fit at any age—even in their 80s. Start slowly with exercises you can do sitting. See page 52.

I do not think I would be comfortable in a class. None of the women in my family exercise.

Many people are not comfortable exercising in front of others. There are many things you can do at home while you do housework. You can also exercise to TV programs and DVDs. And there are classes for women only. Call a center on pages 56–57.

I've always hated exercise. It hurts and it is boring.

Nobody wants to do something painful or boring! If exercise hurts, you are doing too much, too fast. If it is boring, look through this guide to find interesting, fun ways to be active.

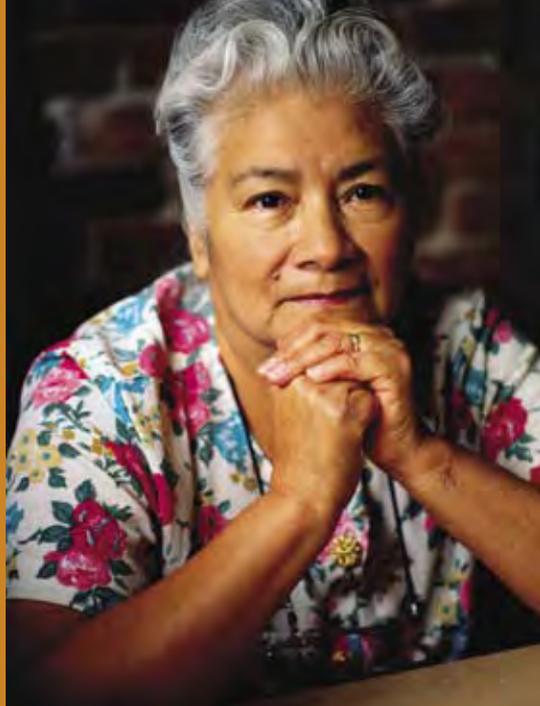
▼ **We both feel like we need to lose some weight before we can be more active.**

Being more active can help you be healthier now. It can also help you lose weight or prevent weight gain. Try walking a little every day to start. See page 34.



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© Ryan McVay/Digital Vision/Getty Images

▲ **I have diabetes. I'm afraid being more active will make it worse.**

Being active can help people keep diabetes under control. See page 16 for tips for people with diabetes.

I cannot afford to pay for classes or join a gym.

This guide shows many ways to be active at home or in your neighborhood. Many of the centers on pages 56–57 have free classes for seniors. You don't need new clothes or shoes—just comfortable ones.

I used to walk a lot with my wife. Since she died, I don't feel like doing anything.

The death of a loved one is a common cause of depression. Physical activity can help prevent depression. Not doing anything can make depression worse. For more tips, see page 15.

▶ **I have arthritis. I'm afraid of hurting myself.**

The Arthritis Foundation sponsors pool exercise and Tai Chi classes because they are so helpful for people with arthritis. You can also do gentle activities at home. See page 16 for tips for people with arthritis.



© Barry Austin Photography/Lifesize/Getty Images

▲ **I take care of my granddaughter after school. I also care for my parents. I don't have much time for me.**

Taking care of yourself can help you take better care of your family. You can keep fit while you do everyday activities—see page 5. For caregiver resources, see page 12.



Courtesy of Holly Brown-Williams

Active Every Day

You can be healthier by being active in your everyday life. And you can start at any age—even if you have not been active before. The best way to be active is to do what you enjoy—gardening, dancing, playing with your grandchildren, walking with a friend—anything that gets you up and moving.



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Being Active Can Help You...

- Have more energy.
- Control your weight.
- Lower your risk for heart disease.
- Lower your risk for type 2 diabetes.
- Keep your balance and prevent falls.
- Reduce aches and pains.

Be More Active with Family or Friends

- Find regular times to walk together.
- Take a class together at a community center near you. See pages 56–57.
- Walk grandchildren to and from school.
- Do the **Healthy Trails Challenge**. You get a prize when you do 5 local hikes in one year. Call **408-355-2201** or visit **www.parkhere.org**.

◀ **My Grandchild Keeps Me Active**

When Lou retired, he started walking his granddaughter to school and back. “We walk almost 2 miles a day. I love our time together.”



© Mark Tantrum

Things You Can Do

Get Up and Move Every 30 Minutes

Most adults watch TV 4 hours a day. Watching TV puts you in an inactive mood, so get up and move often. You will be less stiff and have more energy.

- ▶ Stand up and stretch.
- ▶ Walk to the TV to change channels.
- ▶ Get a glass of water during commercials.
- ▶ Do the sitting exercises on pages 52–53.
- ▶ Do the Sit to Stand exercise on page 47.

Set an Active Mood

- ▶ Turn off the TV. Put on some music.
- ▶ Open some windows or turn on a fan.
- ▶ Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.

Get More Out of What You Do Every Day

You do not have to set aside a lot of time to be active. Think about the things you do already. Then look for ways to make them more active.

- ▶ Sweep, mop, or vacuum with a lot of energy. Then stretch.
- ▶ Walk all or part of the way to the store. Or park at the far end of the parking lot.
- ▶ Try the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.
- ▶ Stretch your legs when you're on the phone—stand up, walk around.

▲ Find a Place to Garden

Many cities have community gardens like Guadalupe Gardens in San Jose. To find one, call **San Jose Community Gardens** at **408-793-4165**.

Get More Out of Gardening

- Start and end slowly with 10–15 minutes of sweeping or raking.
- Then do your harder work. Dig, shovel, mow the lawn, or turn the compost.
- Don't overdo it. Remember to stand up and stretch every 10 minutes or so.
- When you shovel or lift, bend your knees and hips. Keep your back straight. See page 22.
- Stretch at the end so your muscles don't cramp up.

Did you know?

Exercise can help you control chronic pain. **See page 17.**

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Find Things to Do In Your Community

It is usually easiest to do things close to home. Many areas in Silicon Valley have community centers that offer free or low-cost activities, including walking groups. Many places of worship also offer walking groups and other activities. Or you can start your own walking group.

Find a Community Center Near You

Some centers are for everyone. Others are mainly for seniors. Some offer many kinds of recreation. Many centers also offer low-cost lunches and other social activities.

- See pages 56–57 for a list of many centers in Silicon Valley.
- To find a center, call **1-800-510-2020**.
- Most senior center classes are low-cost or free.

For a Safer Neighborhood

Report dangerous intersections, potholes, streetlight problems, uneven sidewalks, and other hazards. Call your city's department of transportation. To get the number for your city, call **211**.

▼ Weight Lifting in Sunnyvale

The Sunnyvale Senior Center offers dance, lawn bowling, golf, pottery classes, lunches, and hiking trips. This class includes men and women ages 50 to 80.

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Things You Can Do

Explore Your Neighborhood

- ▶ Get to know your local businesses, especially the ones you can walk to.
- ▶ To find the closest farmer's market, visit **www.cafarmersmarkets.com**.
- ▶ Find out if your local high school has a pool that is open to the public.
- ▶ Find nearby parks. See page 55.

Start Walking

- ▶ Take a walk with a neighbor. If you enjoy it, make it a regular habit. This is a good idea for safety, too.
- ▶ Ask if your nearest mall has a walking group. Malls are great places to walk when it's too hot, cold, wet, or dark to walk outside.
- ▶ Find out if your local high school has a track you can walk on. Some tracks are lit up at night.

Call 511 for Transit Information

- ▶ Dial **511** for bus, light rail, and train schedules.
- ▶ Ask about services for people with disabilities and seniors. Or see page 63.
- ▶ Find bike routes on the web at **<http://bicycling.511.org>**.
- ▶ Some Senior Centers will pick you up and bring you home. See pages 56–57.

▲ Enjoying the Los Gatos Creek Trail

Bicyclists and walkers share this popular trail.

For a Healthier Neighborhood

Trees add to the beauty of our cities. They also improve the quality of the air and reduce noise. Cities have tree-planting rules and programs. For information on good street trees, or for help planting trees, call **Our City Forest** at **408-998-7337**.

Did you know?

Walking is the most popular physical activity for adults of all ages. **See page 34.**

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Explore Your Interests

If you are retired, or are planning to retire soon, you will have more time to do the things you have always wanted to do. You will also have more time to try new things. Think about learning something new or returning to a hobby that you once loved. Or consider sharing your skills as a volunteer.



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▲ Building a House

Doing things you care about feels good. It can also keep you active and fit. This Senior Corps RSVP group is helping to build a house.

Did you know?

You can volunteer and be active by taking part in a local walk-a-thon.

Senior Corps Programs

Senior Corps offers three ways to volunteer.

- **RSVP** connects volunteers age 55+ with service projects that match their skills. Call **408-979-7906** in the south of Santa Clara County and **650-696-7660** in the north.
- The **Foster Grandparent Program** connects volunteers age 55+ with children and young people with special needs. Call **408-944-0668**.
- **Senior Companions** help people with shopping, light chores, doctor visits, and companionship. Call **408-979-7907**.



Courtesy of the PA Department of Aging

Things You Can Do

Check Out Your Library

Has it been a while since you went to a library? You may be surprised by all the services you can get.

- ▶ Get a library card. Usually you just need to bring a photo ID and something that proves where you live, like a utility or phone bill.
- ▶ Sign up to learn how to use a computer.
- ▶ Read about local activities on the bulletin board.
- ▶ Bring your grandchildren to storytelling time.
- ▶ Borrow an exercise DVD.
- ▶ If you have vision problems, ask about large-print books or books-on-tape.

Volunteer in Your Community

- ▶ You can often find your own volunteer job at your favorite charity or your place of worship. Or ask at a local school, hospital, or community center.
- ▶ **Volunteer Match** is a website that helps people volunteer in non-profit agencies. Visit www.volunteermatch.org. If you need help using the website, call **415-241-6872**.
- ▶ Volunteer in **SCORE** to share your business skills with small and start-up local businesses. Call **408-288-8479**.
- ▶ Senior Corps offers several ways to volunteer. See page 8.

▲ Learning Computer Skills in Morgan Hill

Many of the centers listed on pages 56–57 offer computer training. Plus, they have computer labs where you can e-mail friends or relatives and look up information on the Internet.

Take a Class

- Adult Ed programs offer classes on computers, languages, nature, dance, cooking, travel, sports, and many other topics.
- Call **211** to find programs at your local library, high school, or community college.
- For more resources to help you find a class or explore an interest, see page 62.

▼ Get Creative

Many recreation and community centers also offer classes, like this pottery class at the Sunnyvale Senior Center.



Courtesy of Sunnyvale Senior Center

Eat Healthy Foods

For most people, it is more important to eat healthy food and be active than it is to diet. But no matter what your weight, eating well and staying active can make you healthier. Aim for a heart-healthy diet—low in animal fats and high in vegetables, fruits, and fiber. What's good for the heart is also better for the brain.

▼ Find a Farmer's Market

For local fresh foods, check out farmer's markets. To find one, visit www.cafarmersmarkets.com.



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Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

- Grow your own. For tips, go to a local nursery.
- To save money, buy food in season and in bulk.
- Try to eat 5–7 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. A serving is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.

Eat Low-Fat Dairy and Proteins

- As we age we need more protein, but less fat.
- Try beans, tofu, eggs, and low-fat milk products.
- Choose low-fat meats like skinned chicken, fish, or lean red meat.
- Eat fish about twice a week.
- Try to eat 3 servings of protein a day. A serving of meat fits in the palm of your hand.

Did you know?

A can of soda has 200–300 calories, but no health benefits.

Things You Can Do



© Mark Tantrum

▲ Learning to Garden

For gardening advice, call the **Master Gardener Helpline** at **408-282-3105**. If you do not have a garden, you can rent a plot at a community garden like this one. Visit **www.sjcommunitygardens.org**.

Eat More Whole Grains and Fiber

- Whole grains have more fiber, vitamins, and minerals than refined grains.
- Eat oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat bread and pasta, cornmeal, and popcorn.
- Try to eat at least 3 servings of whole grains a day. A serving is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.
- Beans, vegetables, and fruits also have a lot of healthy fiber.

Use Liquid Vegetable Oils

Use corn, peanut, canola, or olive oil. They are healthier for the heart than butter, lard, and partially hydrogenated fats, like margarine.

Talk to Your Doctor If...

- ▶ You need to lose or gain weight. Or you have lost or gained weight without wanting to.
- ▶ You don't know how to eat on a special diet.
- ▶ You have tooth or mouth problems that make it hard to eat.
- ▶ You are often constipated or have runny stool.
- ▶ You are too tired to eat or not interested in food.

Drink Enough Water

As we get older, we are less aware of being thirsty, but we still need lots of water.

- ▶ Try to drink water at every meal and between meals.
- ▶ When you exercise or the weather is hot, drink more.
- ▶ Many chronic illnesses and medicines affect how much water we need. Talk to your doctor.

Reduce or Prevent Weight Gain

With age, many people are less active and eat more. We lose muscle cells and gain fat cells. Fat cells use food more slowly than muscle cells.

To prevent too much weight gain, be active and build muscles. Eat vegetables, fruits, high-fiber grains, and low-fat proteins. Have fewer snacks, sweets, and high-sugar drinks. Eat smaller servings.

Food and Nutrition Resources

- ▶ For more information on nutrition, food labels, and food safety, visit **www.nutrition.gov**.
- ▶ For local food and meal resources, see page 58.

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Stress, Worry, and Sleep

Many things in today's world cause stress and worry. You cannot avoid all stress and worry in your life. But there are things you can do—like being active and spending time with other people—to keep stress from wearing you down.

If You Are Caring for a Loved One

Don't forget to take care of yourself, too. Research shows that taking care of yourself improves the care you give loved ones.

- Try to get some physical activity every day—it helps you relax and gives you more energy.
- Ask for and accept help. Let others do small tasks, like picking up groceries.
- If sleep is a problem, talk to your doctor. See page 13.
- It is common to feel angry, sad, anxious, or exhausted at times. If these feelings last for several weeks, you could be dealing with depression. See pages 14–15.
- Join a support group with other caregivers. Call the **Council on Aging** at **1-800-510-2020**.

◀ Take Time for Yourself

John has been caring for his ill wife for 2 years. He asks a friend to stay with her twice a week so he can lawn bowl with his buddies.

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Things You Can Do

Get a Good Night's Sleep

- ▶ Go to bed and get up at the same time each day.
- ▶ Try to get some exercise during the day.
- ▶ Avoid caffeine in the evening. It is in coffee, tea, cola, and chocolate.
- ▶ Avoid alcohol before bed. It may help you go to sleep but it prevents deep sleep.
- ▶ Take time to relax before you go to bed—read or listen to quiet music.
- ▶ If you feel tired when you wake up, or people say that you snore heavily or gasp, talk to your doctor.
- ▶ For more tips, call the **National Institute on Aging** at **1-800-222-2225**.

Tips to Help You Manage Stress

- ▶ Make a list of things that stress you. Then start by dealing with something small.
- ▶ Talk things over with a trusted friend or relative or a doctor, counselor, or religious advisor.
- ▶ Eat a healthy diet. See pages 10–11.
- ▶ Drink plenty of water. Try to avoid alcohol.
- ▶ Some activities, like yoga and Tai Chi, can help you relax. See page 36.
- ▶ Find out if your health plan offers classes on reducing stress and improving sleep.

Money Worries

In today's economy, most people have money worries. Call the **Council on Aging** at **1-800-510-2020** for information on credit counselors, financial help, and financial fraud.



Blend Images/Jupiterimages

▲ Singing Lifts Our Spirits

Singing is one of the best ways to practice deep breathing, reduce stress, and have fun with others. Look for a singing group at your local community center or place of worship.

Take a Deep Breath

Taking slow, deep breaths—sometimes called belly breathing—helps reduce stress. It also gives you more energy because your body gets more oxygen.

- 1 Sit or stand straight, with your shoulders relaxed.
- 2 Breathe slowly in through your nose as you push your belly out.
- 3 Breathe out through your mouth as you pull your belly in. Take a little longer to breathe out than in.
- 4 Do 4–5 times.

If You Care for a Grandchild

To find a grandparents' support group, call the **Kinship Resource Center** at **408-200-0980**. For tips on fun activities to do with your grandchildren, visit www.aarp.org/family/grandparenting.

Depression and Sadness

Almost everyone feels sad or depressed at times. As we age, loss and grief can make depression a serious problem. But there is a lot you can do to prevent depression and to get help if you need it. Being active is one of the best ways to help prevent depression.

Facts About Depression

- A stroke, heart disease, or other health problem can lead to depression. Depression can then make it harder for the body to heal.
- The loss of a spouse often causes serious depression.
- Older people are less likely to get help for depression than younger people.
- Research shows that exercise helps prevent depression.

Common Signs of Depression In Older Adults

- Feeling sad, tired, or hopeless.
- Having problems with eating, sleeping, or drinking.
- Not wanting to be with people or do things.

► A Walk with a Friend

Charles says, “My wife died a year ago. I didn’t want to eat or do anything. My friend, Sam, dragged me out on walks and got me to spend more time with other people.”

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Things You Can Do



© Geoff Manasse/Photodisc/Getty Images

▲ Do Things You Care About

Volunteering feels good, and it keeps your mind and body active. Groups like the Sierra Club use volunteers to maintain trails and restore parks. For many more ways to get involved, see page 8.

Retirement and Depression

Some people become depressed when they retire. Retirement is a big change. It affects your daily routine, your relationships, and your self-image. But it also gives you a chance to do things you have wanted to do.

- Be prepared with some ways to keep active.
- Take a class on planning for retirement. See page 62.
- Look into a part-time job or volunteer work. See pages 6–9 and page 62.

Did you know?

Keeping socially and physically active helps prevent depression.

Get Help for Depression and Grief

- ▶ If you feel depressed, talk to a doctor, counselor, or religious advisor.
- ▶ Ask what services your health plan will pay for, such as counseling and medicines.
- ▶ Ask about support groups and classes to help you deal with depression, anxiety, or grief.
- ▶ For information, call **Mental Health America** at **1-800-969-6642**. Or visit **www.nmha.org**.
- ▶ For help right now, call **Suicide and Crisis Hotline** at **1-800-784-2433**.
- ▶ If you just want to talk to someone, call the **Friendship Line** at **1-800-971-0016**.
- ▶ For help dealing with death and dying, call the **Centre for Living with Dying** at **408-243-0222**.

Exercise Your Mind

- ▶ Get aerobic exercise. It helps your heart and your mind. See page 32.
- ▶ Keep learning new things. For ideas, see page 62.
- ▶ You can exercise your mind with low-cost puzzles, books, games, and classes. You do not need costly programs.

Help Prevent the Blues

- ▶ Get together with family and friends. Talk. Laugh. Play games.
- ▶ Be active. Walk. Garden. Take a yoga class. Dance.
- ▶ Do something you really enjoy.
- ▶ Eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of water. See pages 10–11.

Live Well with a Chronic Condition

You can be active even if you have an ongoing health problem such as arthritis, diabetes, or heart disease. Physical activity can help you stay healthy and prevent additional health problems.

Talk with your doctor about making physical activity part of your treatment plan. If your doctor cannot give you advice on being more active, ask for a referral to a physical therapist.



Courtesy of Betty Wright Swim Center

◀ Water Therapy in Palo Alto

Warm water can be helpful if you have arthritis or other conditions that cause pain. To find a heated therapy pool, call the **Betty Wright Swim Center** at **650-494-1480** or call the **Timpany Center** at **408-283-9036**.

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Arthritis and Exercise

If you have arthritis, gentle physical activity can help reduce pain and improve flexibility and strength. Water aerobics are a gentle but effective exercise, and many pools offer low-cost classes. Tai Chi is also a great exercise. See page 36. Call the **National Arthritis Foundation** at **1-800-464-6240**. Or visit **www.arthritis.org**.

Diabetes and Exercise

Regular exercise, like walking and swimming, can help you control your glucose level and strengthen your heart. Call the **American Diabetes Association** at **408-241-1922** and ask for a free copy of *A Guide to Changing Habits*. Or visit **www.diabetes.org**.



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Things You Can Do

Exercise Safely

- ▶ Talk to your doctor about the best ways for you to exercise.
- ▶ Do exercises that are gentle on your joints, such as walking, swimming, low-impact aerobics, and water fitness. Avoid high-impact exercises, such as step aerobics or jogging.
- ▶ For more safety tips, see page 30

Learn to Manage Your Chronic Condition

The Road to Healthier Living is a chronic disease self-management program sponsored by **The Health Trust**. For information, call **408-961-9877**.

- ▶ Learn to improve your physical and emotional health and reduce symptoms.
- ▶ Learn about diet, exercise, relaxation, pain management, problem solving, and working with your doctors.
- ▶ This is a 6-week program. Each class is 2 1/2 hours.
- ▶ Each class has two trained leaders. They usually have a chronic condition themselves.
- ▶ Classes are held at a variety of sites and times.
- ▶ This program was developed at Stanford University and has been proven effective.

If You Have a Disability or Chronic Condition

- ▶ The **National Center on Physical Disability and Fitness** has information on fitness activities for people with disabilities. Call **1-800-900-8086** or visit **www.ncpad.org**.
- ▶ Many of the centers on pages 56–57 have classes for people with arthritis and other chronic conditions or disabilities.

▲ Take a Disease Management Program

Ernesto says, “My doctor told me about a diabetes management class offered by my health plan. I learned a lot about diet and exercise. That’s when I started walking.” Ask if your health plan offers classes for people with your condition.

Did you know?

If you have had a heart attack, aerobic activity can help prevent a second one. **See page 32.**

Chronic Pain and Exercise

Exercise can help reduce chronic pain. When you exercise, your body releases chemicals that keep pain signals from reaching your brain. And, as you build strength, you put less stress on your joints. If chronic pain is a problem for you, talk to your doctor. For more information, call the **American Chronic Pain Association** at **1-800-533-3231** or visit **www.theacpa.org**.

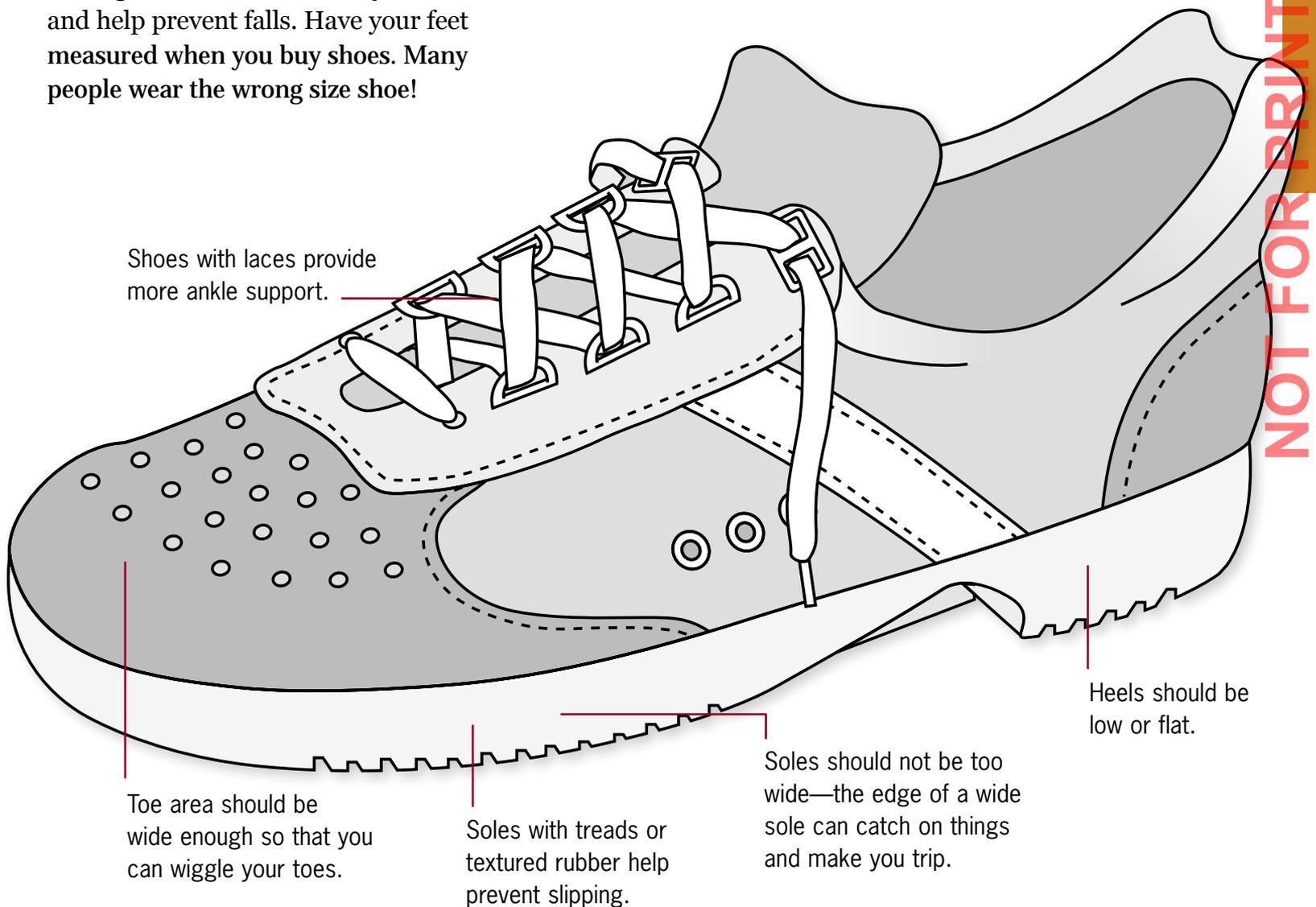
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Shoes and Feet

Years of wear and tear are hard on our feet. Our feet get wider and have less cushioning. We may have problems like bunions and hammertoes. Foot pain is one of the main reasons older adults don't stay active. But foot problems can be treated. Exercise and wearing the right shoes can help.

Shoe-Buying Tips

The right shoes can increase your comfort and help prevent falls. Have your feet measured when you buy shoes. Many people wear the wrong size shoe!





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Did you know?

Strong feet and legs can help prevent falls. **See page 23.**

Check Your Feet

Problems with your feet can be the first sign of conditions such as diabetes. Check your feet every day. Tell your doctor if you notice numbness, redness, swelling, cracks in the skin, or sores that don't heal quickly. If you find a cut, treat it right away.

Orthotics

Orthotics are inserts you put in your shoes to help reduce pain in the feet, knees, or back. Ask a pharmacist to help you choose over-the-counter inserts. Or ask your doctor or podiatrist to prescribe inserts.

Things You Can Do

Keep Your Feet Active

- ▶ Put your feet up when you are sitting.
- ▶ Stretch and wiggle your feet often.
- ▶ Keep your feet warm.
- ▶ Get up and walk around often.
- ▶ Try the foot exercises on page 52.

When You Buy Walking Shoes, Make Sure...

- ▶ You are wearing your usual walking socks.
- ▶ It's the end of the day, when your feet are bigger.
- ▶ The shoes fit your larger foot.
- ▶ The shoes feel good on both feet when you walk.
- ▶ The shoes don't slide up and down on your heels, or rub anywhere.

Prevent Foot Trouble

- ▶ Wash your feet every day.
- ▶ Use lotion on your feet every day.
- ▶ Trim your toenails often. Cut them straight across. They are easier to cut after a bath.
- ▶ Ask your doctor or podiatrist how to treat corns, calluses, and bunions. Never use a razor or knife—you can cut yourself and cause infection.
- ▶ Replace your shoes when they no longer cushion your feet or the soles are worn down.
- ▶ For more information, visit the **American Podiatric Medical Association** website at **www.apma.org**.

Work with Your Doctor

When you talk with your doctor, be as honest as possible. The more your doctor knows about you and what you want, the better care you'll get.

Keep Your Bones Strong

Osteoporosis means weak bones. It is a problem that gets worse with age. You can help slow it down.

- Do weight-bearing exercises like walking and weight lifting.
- Ask your doctor about taking calcium and vitamin D to help keep your bones strong.
- Eat foods rich in calcium, like beans, dairy foods, and leafy greens.

Talk to Your Doctor About Aging

Our bodies keep changing as we age. Ask your doctor about:

- How often you should have a general physical exam and lab tests.
- How often you should get vision and hearing exams.
- Taking extra calcium, vitamin B12, and vitamin D.
- A bone density test, to see if you have osteoporosis.
- Vaccines for flu, pneumonia, and shingles.
- When you should get a colonoscopy to help prevent colon cancer.
- How to check for skin cancer.
- Ways to be physically active.

◀ Ask All Your Questions

Steve asks his doctor to explain how exercise might help him keep his blood pressure under control.



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Things You Can Do

Talk to Your Doctor Before You Start an Exercise Program If...

- ▶ It has been a long time since you exercised.
- ▶ You have a medical condition like diabetes, asthma, heart disease, or a hernia. See page 16.
- ▶ You feel weak or unsteady.
- ▶ You recently had surgery.

Make the Most of Your Doctor Visits

- ▶ Plan ahead so you can cover everything.
- ▶ Bring a list of your questions and concerns.
- ▶ Repeat things in your own words to make sure you understand.
- ▶ Take notes, or bring a friend to help.

Keep Track of Your Health

- ▶ You can keep track of your health, set fitness goals, and measure your progress with an online Personal Health Record. Ask if your health plan offers one.
- ▶ For a free, confidential health assessment, go to **www.healthtrust.org** and click on the HEALTHcheck icon.
- ▶ You have a right to get a copy of your own medical records. You may be charged for copying.
- ▶ Health is a family affair. Create a Family Health Portrait at **www.hhs.gov/familyhistory**.

Find Health Care

For help finding health care and insurance, call the **Uninsured Help Line** at **1-800-234-1317**. For local clinics and hospitals, see pages 60–61.



Courtesy of HICAP

▲ Free Medicare Counseling and Information

HICAP is the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy program for people with Medicare. Call **HICAP** at **1-800-434-0222**. You can see a free counselor at a senior center in your area.

If You Smoke

Smoking causes many health problems. Quitting is hard, but it is one of the best things you can do for yourself. Within a few days, you'll find it easier to breathe and you'll have more energy.

- Ask your doctor or clinic about help to quit.
- Ask if your health plan has classes or other support.
- For free telephone help to quit, call the **California Smokers Helpline** at **1-800-662-8887**. Or visit their website at **www.californiasmokershelpline.org**.

Medicine Safety

Taking the wrong medicine, or taking it in the wrong way, can cause serious problems.

- Use a pill organizer to make sure you take the right pill at the right time.
- Tell your doctor and pharmacist all the medicines you take.
- When you pick up a prescription, make sure it is the right medicine and dose.

Prevent Injuries and Falls

There are safer ways to do most of the things we do, and to prevent most injuries. Falls are the most common cause of serious injuries for older adults.

Lifting

- Before you lift anything, ask yourself: “Can I lift it alone?” “Do I need help?”
- Squat down, bending your knees and hips, not your waist. Let your legs do the lifting.
- Hold the object close to your body as you stand up. Don’t twist.

Carrying a Load Up or Down Stairs

- Leave one hand free to hold on to the handrail.
- Make sure you can still see where you are going.
- Divide big loads and make more trips.
- Put an awkward package in a basket that you can carry with one hand.
- Put a heavy package down on a step so you can rest a moment.
- Ask for help!

► A Safe Hug

Leo kneels down to hug his granddaughter. He holds her close before he lifts her. This puts less strain on his back than standing and leaning down.





© Digital Vision/Getty Images

▲ Exercise Helps Prevent Falls

You can improve your strength and balance at any age. Exercise regularly. The stronger you are, the less likely you are to fall. And, if you do fall, you will be less likely to get hurt.

If You Worry About Falling

Think about wearing a medical alert in case of falls or other emergencies. For information, call the **Council on Aging** at **1-800-510-2020**. Or keep a cell or cordless phone in your pocket. If you live alone, arrange a daily call with a friend or neighbor.

Did you know?

You can improve your balance in just a few minutes a week. **See page 42.**

Things You Can Do

Prevent Falls

Research shows that doing these things can help prevent falls:

- ▶ Exercise regularly to improve your balance and build strength.
- ▶ Ask your doctor to review your medicines. If a medicine makes you confused, sleepy, or dizzy, tell your doctor.
- ▶ Get regular eye exams. Be extra careful if you use bifocals—they increase the risk of falls. Or get two pairs of glasses—one for distance and one for reading.
- ▶ Make your home safer. See pages 24–25.
- ▶ Get regular health exams and follow-up care.
- ▶ Wear the right shoes. See page 18.
- ▶ If you smoke, stop. Smoking increases your risk of osteoporosis (weak bones).
- ▶ For more information on fall prevention, visit **www.stopfalls.org**.

If You Are at Risk of Falling

Farewell to Falls is a free program for people with a high risk of falls. Someone can come to your home to help you find ways to prevent falls. Call **650-724-9369**.

NOT FOR PRINT

Make Your Home Safer

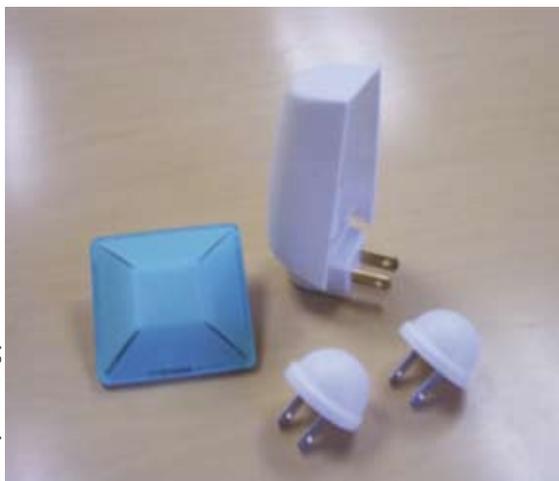
Beginning in our fifties, we need more light to see well. It is more dangerous to climb on things to reach high shelves. And we are more likely to trip on an uneven surface. There is a Home Safety Checklist at the back of this guide on page 65.

Get Enough Light

- Open curtains during the day.
- Reduce glare—use lampshades and frosted bulbs.
- Make sure you can turn the lights on as you enter a room. Or use motion-sensitive lights that turn on automatically.
- Use lighted wall switches.
- Put lamps on timers so they turn on at dusk.

▼ Adding Light

Nightlights are a low-cost way to make dark areas safer. Use the kind that turn on automatically in the dark.



Courtesy of James Nguyen



▲ Get Some Time-Keeping Help

As we age, it is harder to do many things at once. A timer reminds you that food is cooking or water boiling. Make sure you can hear it from all parts of your house or yard. Or carry it with you.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- Replace the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms at least once a year.
- If you have a hearing problem, you can get a smoke alarm with a light that flashes on and off.
- You can also get one that you can turn off with your TV remote.



Courtesy of Rebuilding Together San Francisco

Things You Can Do

Make Your Kitchen Safer

- ▶ Use a timer when something is cooking.
- ▶ Store the things you use most within easy reach.
- ▶ Remove rugs, or use one with a rubber backing.
- ▶ Use non-skid floor wax.
- ▶ Wipe up spills right away.
- ▶ Stretch often and sit down when you are tired.

Make Your Bathroom Safer

Slippery tubs, soapy feet, and wet floors cause many falls.

- ▶ Put a mat with rubber backing beside the tub or shower.
- ▶ Put a rubber tub mat or non-slip decals inside.
- ▶ Install sturdy grab bars in the tub or shower.

Home Safety Resources

- ▶ For groups that help people make home safety improvements, see page 64.
- ▶ To find tools for people with disabilities or chronic conditions like arthritis, call **AT Network** at **1-800-390-2699**.
- ▶ The **California Telephone Access Program** has special phones at no cost for people with disabilities. Call **1-800-806-1191**.
- ▶ For more information on home safety, visit **www.homesafetycouncil.org**.
- ▶ For ideas and resources to help people live with vision loss, call the **Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired** at **1-800-660-2009**.

▲ Help Making Repairs

Rebuilding Together volunteers, like Jesse, help people make their homes safer. Call **408-578-9519**.

If You Rent

It is your landlord's duty to fix floors, stairs, and other safety hazards. You can also ask your landlord to make other changes for safety, such as putting in lights and handrails. Or ask if you can make these changes.

Fitness After Fifty

You can get fitter at any age—even if you have been inactive up to now. You can improve your balance in a few minutes a week. You can improve your strength and benefit your heart and brain with about 30 minutes of activity on most days of the week.



© Dave & Les Jacobs/Blend Images/Getty Images

Why Fitness Matters

- It increases energy.
- It helps control weight.
- It lowers the risk for heart disease
- It lowers the risk for type 2 diabetes
- It helps prevent depression.
- It helps maintain mental skills.
- It improves balance and lowers the risk of falls.
- It helps joints stay more flexible, and less stiff and sore.

◀ One Exercise—Many Benefits

This class is doing the Lunge on page 43. This is an exercise for balance, flexibility, and strength.

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Things You Can Do

Aerobic Activities

- ▶ Spread your aerobics throughout the week.
- ▶ Try to do at least 10 minutes at a time.
- ▶ Aim for 30 minutes on at least 5 days a week. See page 33.
- ▶ Examples: Walking briskly, digging, dancing, swimming

Strength Activities

- ▶ Try to do strength activities at least 2 days a week.
- ▶ Spread your strength-building activities throughout the week. See pages 44–49.
- ▶ Examples: Climbing stairs, lifting weights

Stretching Activities

- ▶ Stand up, move around, and then stretch gently whenever you have been sitting for a while.
- ▶ If you feel stiff when you wake up, do gentle stretches.
- ▶ Stretch after you do aerobic or strengthening activities. See pages 50–51.
- ▶ Examples: Pruning, yoga, Tai Chi

Balance Activities

- ▶ You can practice balance for just 1–5 minutes at a time. Do the exercises on pages 42–43 twice a week. Or stand on one leg when you wait in line.
- ▶ If you do regular aerobics, strength-building, and stretching, you probably get some balance practice.
- ▶ Examples: Tai Chi, gardening, hiking, yoga



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▲ **Bicycling—For Fun and Fitness**

Bicycling is aerobic exercise. That means it's great for the heart and lungs. It also builds strength and improves balance.

Four Kinds of Fitness Activities

Our bodies need a variety of activities. Many activities build several kinds of fitness at once.

- **Aerobic**, or endurance, activities help keep your heart and lungs strong, so you do not get out of breath and feel tired as quickly.
- **Strength** activities help keep your muscles strong, so that you can still climb stairs and do other everyday things. If we do not use our muscles, they get weaker and weaker.
- **Stretching** helps keep your joints flexible, so you feel less stiffness and pain.
- **Balance** activities help you stay steady, even if you stumble. Our balance skills start to get worse as young as age 30—unless we keep up the practice.

Fitting Fitness In

How do you find time to be active? Choose activities you enjoy and make them part of your routine. Even better, make being active part of your family's routine. Being fit takes some time each day. But it is time that benefits you and the people around you.

▼ Family Time

A weekend walk, with 3 generations and the family pet, keeps everyone active.



Courtesy of Andrea Spurgeon



© Dave & Les Jacobs/Blend Images/Getty Images

▲ Meeting a Goal

Inez was having trouble getting up from a couch. "I was afraid of getting weaker. I found an aerobics class at my community center. Getting up from my couch is easier now."

Be More Active with Family And Friends

- Take a brisk walk before having lunch or dinner together.
- Bike, swim, or do yoga together.
- Take grandchildren to the park or zoo.
- If your family won't join you, be active with friends or a group.

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Things You Can Do

Set Goals and Keep Track of Your Progress

- Set small, realistic goals. “This month I will walk 20 minutes on 3 days a week.”
- Make your goal something you can measure. “I will take an exercise class 2 times a week” is easier to measure than “I will get fit.”
- Track your activities on a calendar.
- If you do not meet a goal, make it easier.
- After a few weeks, set a new goal.

Make a Routine

We are more likely to do things that are part of our daily routine. If your goal is to walk 30 minutes on most days, think about how you can work that into your everyday life. Can you walk during your lunch break or before dinner?

If You Are Too Tired

The less active you are, the less energy you have. But you can break the cycle. Start slowly and use your prime time. For some people that's the morning. For others it's the evening. Make your natural energy work for you.

Don't Have Enough Time?

- ▶ Take a 1-minute break: do a balance exercise.
- ▶ Take a 10-minute break: lift a few weights or take a short, brisk walk.
- ▶ Take a 20-minute break: do a DVD exercise program. Briskly rake leaves or sweep the floor.
- ▶ Get up early: do a DVD or TV exercise program, or walk to work.
- ▶ Use your lunch break: walk with a co-worker.

Bored?

- ▶ Do different activities on different days.
- ▶ Do activities you enjoy. Garden. Go bowling.
- ▶ Do things with people. Join a walking group or sign up for a class.
- ▶ Learn something new. There are many programs listed on pages 56–57.

Have a Back-Up Plan

Many things can get in the way of your routine—an ache or a pain, bad weather, or guests. This is when you need a back-up plan.

- ▶ Tai Chi and swimming are great back-ups because they are very gentle. See pages 36–39.
- ▶ If the weather keeps you in, walk in a mall or take a class at a community center.
- ▶ Keep some DVDs to use.
- ▶ Invite guests to join you in your routine.
- ▶ For tips on dealing with walking aches and pains, see page 35.

Exercise Safety

Most people of any age can exercise safely. But if you have been inactive or you have a health problem, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before you start a new exercise program.

Some people are afraid they will hurt themselves. Or they think they are too out of shape or too old. There is some risk with any physical activity. But the risks of being inactive are greater than the risks of being active.

► **Stretch After You Exercise**

Bette stretches with a video after her walk.

Courtesy of Holly Brown-Williams



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Have a Safe Routine

- 1 Warm up:** Warming up gets you breathing a little faster and deeper. It gets your blood flowing and warms up your muscles and joints. This helps prevent injuries. You can warm up by walking. Or see pages 40–41.
- 2 Then do aerobics or strength exercises:** You breathe faster. You get warmer, and you may sweat. You may feel your heart beating. Brisk walking is aerobic.
- 3 Cool down:** Gradually slow down. This allows your heart and breathing to slow down. The exercises on pages 40–41 are good for cooling down, too.
- 4 Stretch at the end:** Stretch when your muscles are warm. Stretching muscles that are not warmed up can lead to injury. Stretching after exercise helps prevent cramps and stiffness. See pages 50–51.

Things You Can Do

Talk to Your Doctor If...

- ▶ It has been a long time since you have been physically active.
- ▶ You have a health problem like asthma, a heart condition, a hernia, diabetes, high blood pressure, or arthritis. See pages 16–17.
- ▶ You have had hip or knee surgery.
- ▶ You feel weak or unsteady when you are active.
- ▶ You have a health problem that is not under control. Ask how you can safely be active. And work with your doctor to get your problem under control.

Drink Plenty of Water

Drink water before, during, and after any physical activity. You need extra water, even if you don't feel thirsty, especially in hot weather.

Dress Right

- ▶ Wear shoes that give you good support, have a flat or low heel, and do not have slippery soles. See page 18.
- ▶ Wear clothes that allow you to move freely, like sweat pants and T-shirts.
- ▶ Dress in layers so that you can remove outer clothing as you warm up.
- ▶ When you're done, change out of clothes that are damp from sweat.



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▲ Start and End at a Slow Pace

Gene and Pam start and end their walk slowly.

When Should You Stop an Activity?

- Stop right away if you feel dizzy, have chest pain, or have trouble breathing. If the symptoms don't go away, call your doctor.
- Stop if you feel a sharp pain in a joint or a cramp in a muscle. Drink some water and rest. Gentle stretching may help. If the pain or cramp doesn't go away, call your doctor.
- Stop if you have signs of heat stress—such as weakness, nausea, headache, confusion, cramps, heavy sweating, or dry skin with no sweating.

Aerobics and Heart Health

Aerobics are activities that make you breathe faster and deeper, like brisk walking. Aerobics strengthen your heart, lungs, and muscles. You can go longer without getting out of breath. You have more energy and endurance.

People who do regular aerobic activities are half as likely to get heart disease or have a heart attack.

Aerobics for Everyone

You do not need special skills or costly equipment for aerobic activities such as these:

- Dancing
- Walking briskly or uphill
- Aerobics classes
- Bicycling—on a regular or stationary bike
- Rowing
- Swimming and water fitness
- Jumping rope
- Jogging

► Dancing in Sunnyvale

The Sunnyvale Senior Center offers dance classes, as well as many other classes. See pages 56–57 for the phone number of a center near you.



Courtesy of the Sunnyvale Senior Center

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Things You Can Do

▲ **Aerobics Classes**

Many community centers have classes. You can often find classes at different levels. Ask the instructor which class would be best for you. To find a class, see pages 56–57.

How Hard Should You Exercise?

Pay attention to how you feel. If you haven't been active, a slow walk around the block may be hard enough.

- If you cannot talk, you are working too hard. Your breathing cannot keep up with your body's need for oxygen. Slow down.
- If you can sing while you exercise, you are not working hard enough. Increase your speed or move your arms and legs more.

High Impact or Low Impact?

High impact is when your feet hit the ground hard, as in step aerobics or jogging. High-impact exercises are harder on your feet and joints.

Most older adults do better with low-impact exercises. Try swimming, biking, line dancing, and water aerobics.

How Much Aerobic Activity Is Enough?

- ▶ Try to build up to at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity a day, at least 5 days of the week. These are the latest government guidelines.
- ▶ If you can build up to 60 minutes a day, most days of the week, you'll get even more benefit.
- ▶ If you are new to exercise, try 30 minutes a day in 3 short periods of 10 minutes each.
- ▶ Spread your exercise throughout the week.
- ▶ Remember to warm up and cool down. See pages 40–41.

Slowly Increase Your Aerobic Activity

You can increase your activity a little each month.

- ▶ Exercise on more days of the week.
- ▶ Exercise for longer periods.
- ▶ Exercise faster or move your arms and legs more.

If You Have Had a Heart Attack

- ▶ Exercise can help prevent another heart attack.
- ▶ Ask your doctor if your health plan offers any programs to help you become more active.
- ▶ Call your local senior center or YMCA. Ask if they have a fitness class for people who have had a heart attack. See pages 56–57.

Walking

Walking is a great way to stay healthy. Brisk walking is aerobic, so it helps build endurance and heart health. Walking also builds strength and balance. Get together with a friend to take a walk in a park, a mall, or around your neighborhood.

How Do I Start a Walking Program?

- Call a friend and set a time to walk together.
- Wear low-heeled or flat shoes that support and cushion your feet. See page 18.
- Walk at your normal speed for 5 minutes to warm up.
- Then walk a little faster. Aim for about 100 steps a minute.
- Slow down for the last 3–5 minutes of your walk and let your heart rate go back down.
- Do the **Healthy Trails Challenge**. This is a planned series of local hikes. Call **408-355-2201** or visit **www.parkhere.org**.

How Much Should I Walk?

If you are just beginning a walking program, start with 10 minutes 3 times a week. If you walk already, start where you are now.

- Add 5 to 10 minutes to your walk each week.
- After a few weeks, slowly increase how fast you walk. Or add a hill.
- Try to build up to at least 30 minutes a day, most days of the week. These are the latest government guidelines.

▼ Start a Walking Group

These women know each other from church. They meet every week to walk for about an hour.



Things You Can Do



Courtesy of Sunnyvale Senior Center

▲ Explore Local Trails

This group walks on a different trail each week. That's easy in Silicon Valley, with its many parks. To find a park, see page 55.

Walking in Summer and Winter

As we age, it is harder for our bodies to adapt to hot and cold. Do not let yourself get too hot or cold. Dress in layers.

In Hot Weather

- Walk early or late, when the sun is lower.
- Bring extra water.
- Wear lightweight, loose clothing and a hat.
- Use sunscreen that is at least SPF 30.

In Cold Weather

- Wear a hat and gloves.
- You may need two pairs of socks.

Make Walking a Habit

- ▶ For parks and hiking in Silicon Valley, see page 55.
- ▶ Set up a regular time to take a walk with a friend or family member.
- ▶ Join a walking group. Check with one of the centers on pages 56–57.
- ▶ Find a mall where you can walk in hot or cold weather, or at night.
- ▶ For walking tips, visit www.aarp.org/health/fitness/walking.

Walking Safety

- ▶ Walk with a friend.
- ▶ Carry identification.
- ▶ Avoid roads where drivers can't see you.
- ▶ When it's dark, wear light-colored or reflective clothes. Stay in well-lit areas.
- ▶ If a dog runs after you, do not make eye contact. Stand still and say loudly, "No. Go away."

If You Have Aches and Pains

- ▶ You may feel aches in your joints or muscles when you start a new activity.
- ▶ If your knees hurt, try walking every other day until they feel better. If the pain doesn't go away, see your doctor.
- ▶ If your feet hurt, see page 18.
- ▶ If you need to stop walking for a while, try a stationary bike or look for a public swimming pool. See pages 56–57.

Tai Chi, Yoga, and Other Activities

When we do things with other people, we are more likely to stick with it. It is more fun to exercise in a group. You may need to try several classes before you find one you like.

Benefits of Yoga

- Yoga is a powerful stretching, balance, and relaxation exercise.
- Start with a beginner's or gentle yoga class.
- If you have arthritis or joint problems, check with your doctor before you take a yoga class.

▼ Tai Chi

Tai Chi uses slow, balanced movements. This class is at Asian Americans for Community Involvement.



© Mark Tantrum



© Digital Vision/Getty Images

▲ Yoga

Yoga is a physical and mental practice from India. Most classes, like this one, use postures from Hatha yoga.

Benefits of Tai Chi

- It is easy on the joints.
- It is good for balance, strength, and flexibility.
- Many studies have shown that Tai Chi has physical and mental benefits.
- It is popular with people of all ages, including those with arthritis and other conditions.

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Things You Can Do

Benefits of Pilates

- It strengthens the back and abdomen.
- It can help you maintain good posture.
- It provides good breathing practice.

▼ Pilates

Pilates uses breath and exercise to strengthen the muscles that support the spine and torso. Many classes use a mat, but some use a ball or other equipment.



Find a Class that Works for You

See pages 56–57 for many kinds of classes.

- ▶ Visit different classes and watch or try them out.
- ▶ Look for a leader you like.
- ▶ Find a class with people who are at your level.
- ▶ Look for a friendly group where you do not feel that you have to be perfect.
- ▶ Give yourself time to learn new steps and routines.
- ▶ If you get bored, try another class.

Talk to the Class Instructor

Most leaders want to get to know the people in their class.

- ▶ Ask about the level of the class.
- ▶ Tell the leader if you have any physical problems that limit what you can do.
- ▶ If you cannot do an exercise, ask the leader to help you figure out another way to do it.

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Swimming and Pool Exercise

Swimming and pool exercise help strengthen your heart, lungs, and muscles. They also keep you flexible. They are especially good for people who have arthritis, back or neck problems, mobility problems, or chronic pain. They are also good for people who are overweight. For most water fitness classes, you do not go underwater and you do not need to know how to swim.

Benefits of Pool Exercise

- Pool exercise is good for endurance, strength, and flexibility.
- Almost anyone can do water fitness, even if you cannot do other activities.
- The water supports the weight of your body, so you put less stress on your joints.

Getting Started with Pool Exercise

- Start with a beginning class. Ask if you need to know how to swim.
- If you have any physical limitations, ask if the class is right for you.
- You may have to pay by the class or for a series of classes. Or the cost may be included in your monthly fee at a gym or “Y.”





© Dave & Les Jacobs/Blend Images/Getty Images

Benefits of Swimming

- Swimming uses almost all the muscles in your body, including the muscles in your legs, hips, abdomen, back, and arms.
- It takes more effort to move through water than through air. You build endurance and strength faster when you swim than when you walk.
- The reaching movements gently stretch your arms and legs and help keep your shoulders and hips flexible.

Getting Started with Lap Swimming

Join a swimming class. You'll get coaching. You'll also have people to swim with, and you'll get encouragement to keep going. To make it easier, you can use fins, or a snorkel and mask.

◀ **Water Fitness in Morgan Hill**

This class at Centennial Recreation Center is working with flexible foam tubes, called noodles.

Things You Can Do

Find a Local Pool

- ▶ To find a pool in your area, see pages 55–57. Or visit www.swimmersguide.com.
- ▶ Call for a current schedule and fees. Ask about fees and scholarships for seniors and people with low incomes.
- ▶ Most pools have set times for lap swims. There are often lanes for slow, moderate, and fast swimmers.

Swim Safely

- ▶ Only swim where there is a lifeguard on duty.
- ▶ If you have a health problem, check with your doctor before you start a swimming or water fitness program.
- ▶ If you don't know how to swim, take a class.
- ▶ If you swim or do water fitness outdoors, use a waterproof sunscreen.
- ▶ If you do water fitness in an outdoor pool, you may want to wear a sun hat.
- ▶ Drink plenty of water before and after you swim.

Protect Your Eyes

- ▶ Use goggles to protect your eyes from chlorine. Chlorine and other chemicals are used to keep pools clean.
- ▶ You can buy goggles at most sporting goods stores.
- ▶ You can wear contact lenses with goggles.
- ▶ You can also buy prescription goggles, but they are more costly.

Warm Up and Cool Down

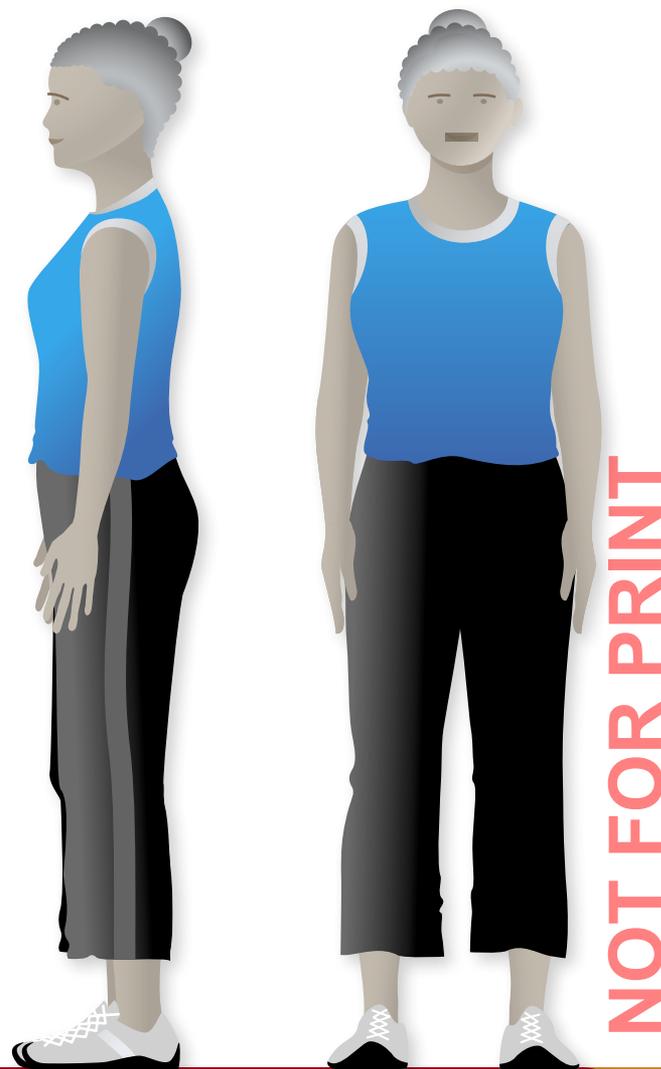
The following pages have many exercises you can do at home. It's always a good idea to start with the warm-up exercises on these 2 pages.

Warming up gets you breathing a little faster and deeper. It gets your blood flowing and warms up your muscles and joints. This helps prevent injuries, stiff joints, and sore muscles. You can also use these exercises to cool down after you walk or do other aerobic activities.

Warm-Up, Cool-Down Movements

You can do these movements sitting or standing. Do each one 5 times, slowly.

- **Neck turns:** Gently turn your neck to look over one shoulder and then the other. Keep your shoulders facing forward.
- **Shoulder rolls:** Lift your shoulders up to your ears. Then roll them back and down.
- **Rowing:** Push your hands out straight in front of you. Then pull your elbows back—like rowing a boat.
- **Hip circle:** Circle your hips in both directions.
- **Gentle twist:** Turn your upper body to the right and left. Keep your hips facing forward.



Sit Tall, Stand Tall, Breathe Deeply

This loosens your chest and back muscles and helps you breathe deeply.

- 1** Sit or stand with your feet hip-width apart.
- 2** Relax your knees.
- 3** Keep your head and neck in line with your back, but not tense.
- 4** Breathe in, filling your chest with air.
- 5** Breathe out, letting your shoulders relax.
- 6** Take a few slow, deep breaths in and out.



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Reach and Pick

This loosens up your shoulders and back.

- 1** Reach one hand above your head as if you were picking fruit off a tree.
- 2** Bring your hand back down.
- 3** Repeat with your other hand.
- 4** Do 15–20 times. Reach as high as possible and reach in different directions.

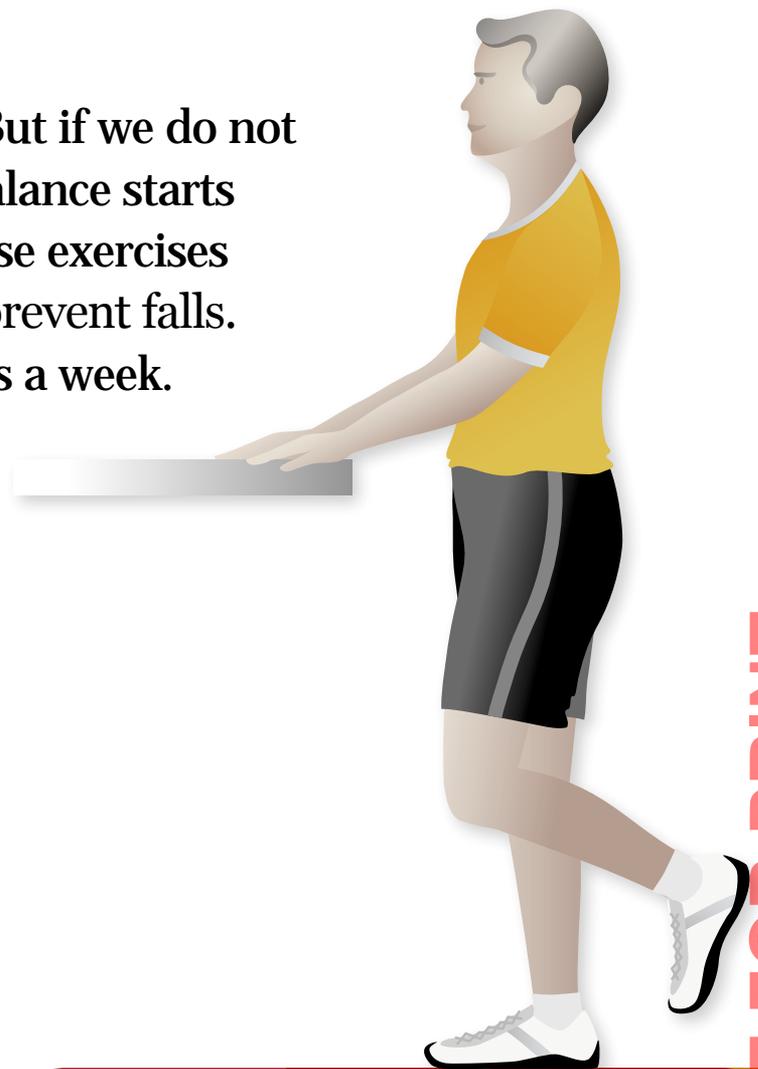
March in Place

This warms up your legs and gently increases your heart rate.

- 1** Sitting or standing, lift one knee and then the other.
- 2** Swing the opposite arm as you lift your knee.
- 3** As you feel ready, lift your knees and swing your arms higher. Stay tall.
- 4** Do for 2–5 minutes, until you are warmer and breathing harder.

Balance Basics

Most of us take balance for granted. But if we do not practice balance skills, our sense of balance starts to decline when we are about 30. These exercises will help you keep your balance and prevent falls. Try to practice balance at least 3 times a week.



How We Balance

Many skills work together to keep us steady. To balance, we use:

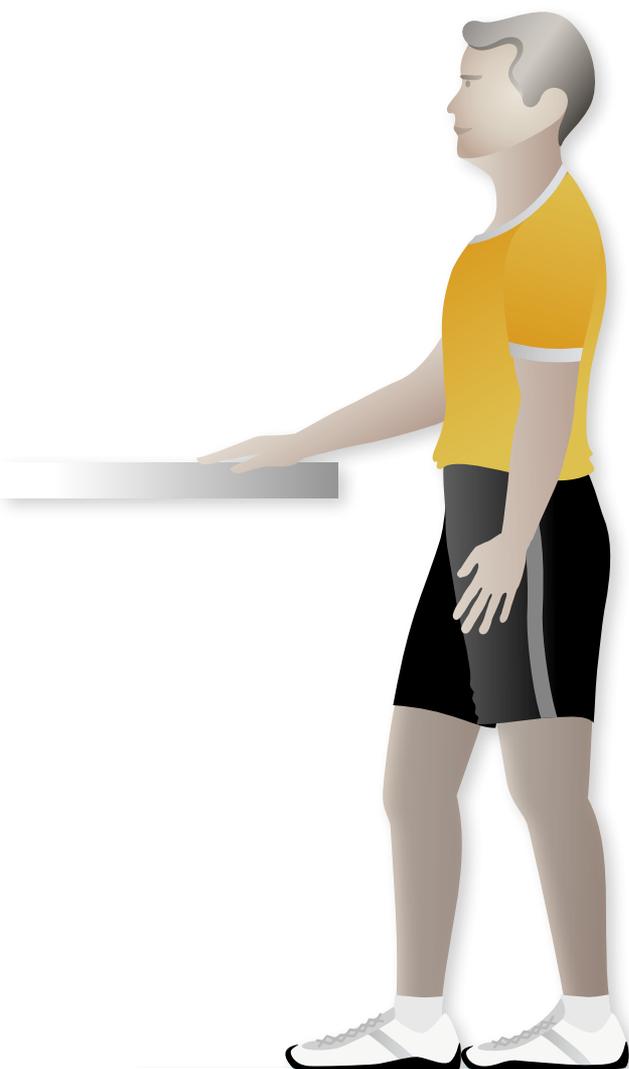
- The strength in our abdomen, back, legs, feet, and ankles.
- Our eyes—to see where we are and what is around us.
- Our inner ear, which helps us keep our balance when we turn quickly.
- The feeling of the ground beneath our feet.
- An inner awareness of where the parts of the body are, so we can even balance with our eyes closed.

One-Leg Stand

This helps you stay steady when you have one foot off the floor.

- 1** Stand facing a counter. Put both hands on the counter.
- 2** When you feel steady, lift one foot off the floor.
- 3** Hold your balance and count slowly to 10.
- 4** Put your foot back on the floor.
- 5** Do 5 times with each foot.

To make it harder: Try it with one hand, one finger, or no fingers on the counter. Try it with your eyes closed.



Tightrope Walk

This helps keep you from falling, even when you are a little off balance.

- 1** Stand with your side to a counter.
- 2** Place one hand on the countertop.
- 3** Put one foot in front of the other, heel to toe.
- 4** Bring your back foot to the front and balance. Take one step and balance again.
- 5** Keep walking heel to toe until you reach the end of the counter.
- 6** Then turn around and walk back.

To make it harder: Put one finger, or no fingers, on the counter. Try walking backwards.



Lunge

This helps you balance when you get up and down. It also strengthens your thighs and buttocks.

- 1** Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart.
- 2** Take a big step backwards with one leg.
- 3** Keep your hips facing forward. Slowly lower your back knee toward the floor.
- 4** Straighten your back leg as you rise up.
- 5** Do 8–12 times on each side.

To make it harder: Hold weights.

Build Strength at Any Age

When your arms, shoulders, and chest are strong, it is easier to lift and carry things. You can use weights and bands to build strength in your upper body.

Using Weights

Weights are heavy. Lift them carefully. And remember to breathe.

- Take a class to learn more about using weights safely. See pages 56–57.
- First, practice the first two exercises here without weights. When you can do them easily, try them with 1- or 2-pound weights. When that feels easy, use heavier weights.
- Use weights 2–3 times a week. Rest at least one day between sessions.
- It's normal for your muscles to feel warm or “jelly-like” after you use weights.
- You can buy low-cost weights. Or use plastic bottles of water.



Courtesy of Yu-Ai Kai

► Using Bands at Yu-Ai Kai

You can also do strength exercises with bands. They are lightweight and low-cost. Clinton is taking a class to learn how to use bands.



Arm Curls

This strengthens your upper arms and makes it easier to carry heavy things.

- 1** Sit or stand with your feet hip-width apart.
- 2** Hold one weight in each hand.
- 3** Start with your arms along your sides.
- 4** Face your palms forward. Keep your wrists straight.
- 5** Press your elbows gently against your sides.
- 6** Slowly bend your elbows, raising the weights toward your shoulders.
- 7** Slowly lower the weights.
- 8** Do 8–15 times.

To make it easier: Do one arm at a time.

To make it harder: Use heavier weights.

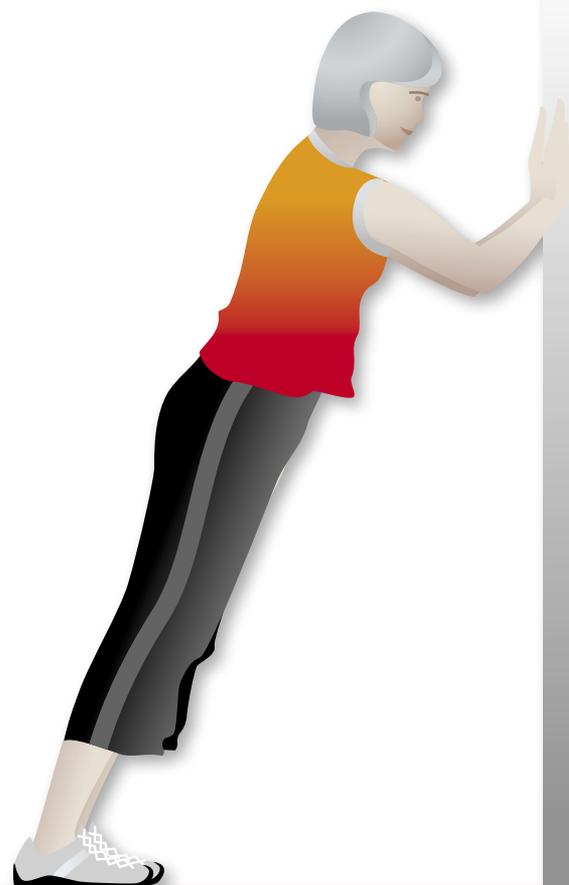
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Side Arm Raises

This strengthens your shoulders and makes it easier to reach up.

- 1** Sit or stand tall, holding weights in each hand.
- 2** Start with both arms at your side, palms facing your body.
- 3** Slowly raise your arms out to the side. Keep your arms almost straight and your shoulders level. If you have to lift your shoulder up to lift the weight, stop. Try the exercise with a lighter weight or no weight.
- 4** When your hands get to chest height, pause. Then slowly lower the weights back down.
- 5** Do 8–15 times.



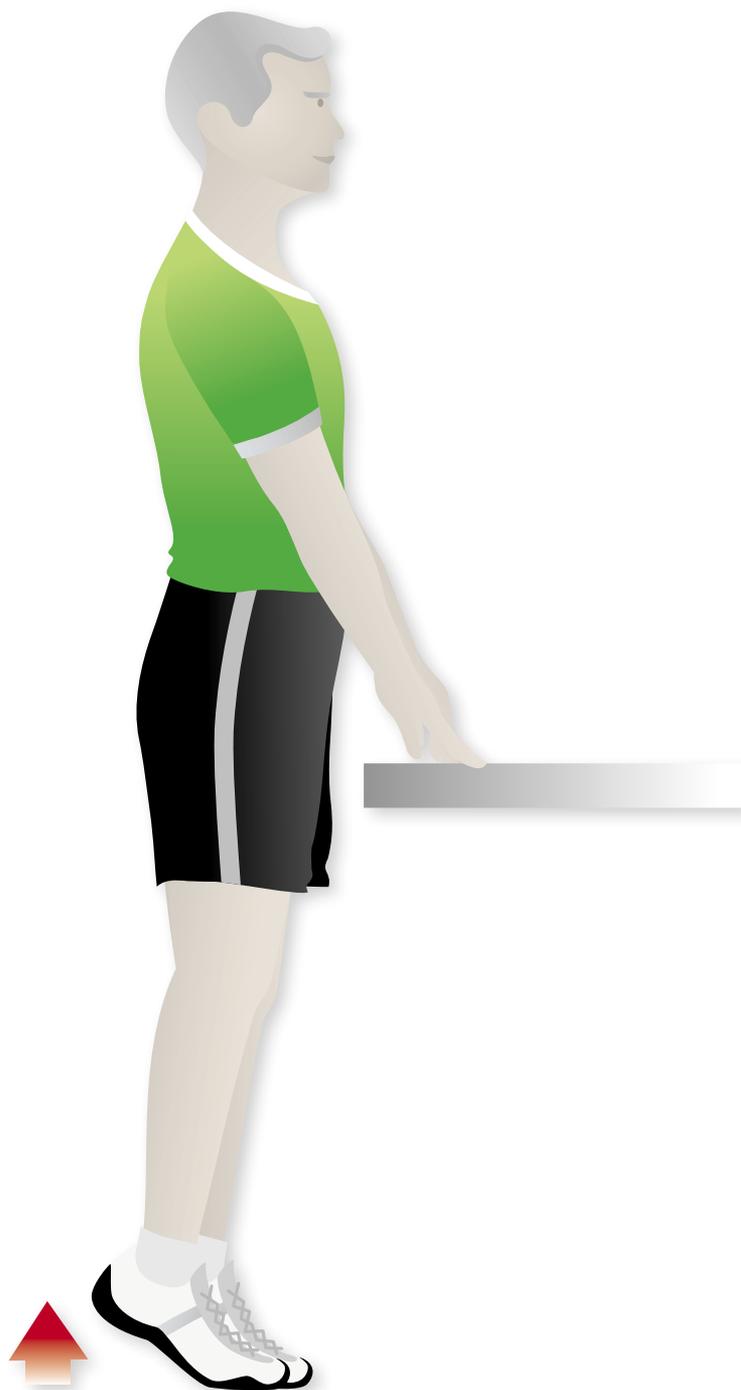
Wall Push-Ups

This strengthens your upper body, abdomen, and back.

- 1** Stand tall facing a wall, arm's distance away.
- 2** Place your hands on the wall, hip-width apart.
- 3** Keep your body stiff as a plank—with back straight and abdomen tight.
- 4** Slowly bend your elbows and bring your nose close to the wall.
- 5** Slowly straighten your arms and return to standing.
- 6** Do 8–12 times.

More Exercises for Strength

Building strength in your legs and hips makes it easier to walk, climb stairs, get out of a chair, and get in and out of a car. And, if you fall, strong muscles make you less likely to hurt yourself. Getting back up is easier, too.



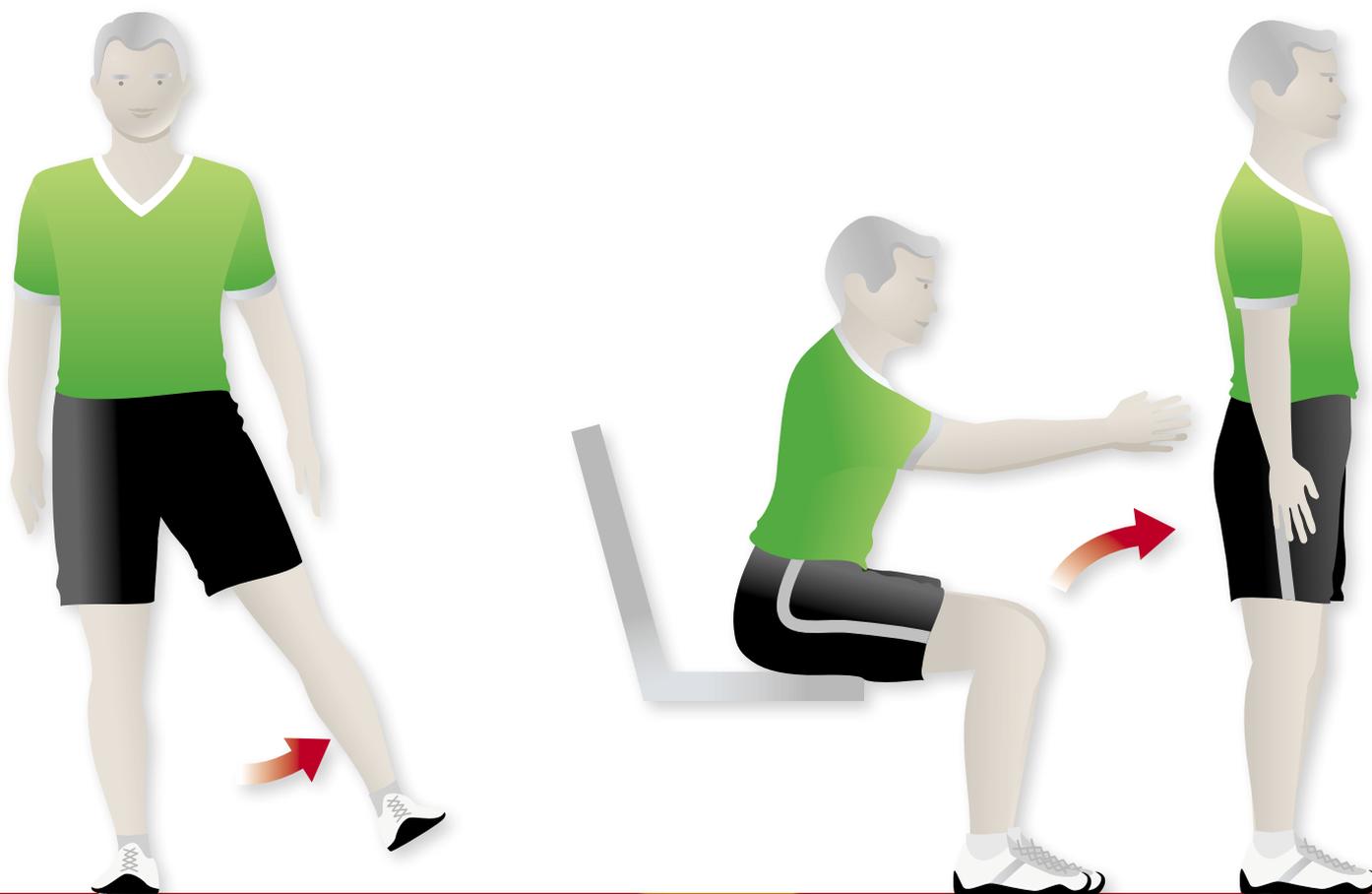
Heel Raises

This strengthens the backs of your lower legs. It's also good for balance.

- 1** Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart.
- 2** Hold on to a counter or the back of a sturdy chair.
- 3** Slowly lift both heels off the floor as high as you can, so you are on the balls of your feet.
- 4** Hold for 5 seconds. Then slowly lower your heels back to the floor.
- 5** Do 8–12 times.

To make it easier: Sit tall in a sturdy chair. Bend forward from your hips. Press your hands firmly on your thighs and lift your heels off the floor. Then slowly lower them back to the floor. Repeat 8–12 times.

To make it harder: Rise up on one foot at a time, holding the other foot off the floor.



Side Leg Lifts

This strengthens your hips. It is also good for balance.

- 1** Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart.
- 2** Slowly lift one leg out to the side 6 to 12 inches.
- 3** Keep your knee straight and your foot facing forward.
- 4** Bring your leg back to the ground.
- 5** Repeat 8–12 times on each side.

To make it easier: Hold on to a sturdy chair or counter.

To make it harder: Lift your leg out to the side, then bring it slowly across the front of your body about 6 inches. Go only as far as you can without twisting your hips or losing your balance.

Sit to Stand

This makes your thighs stronger.

- 1** Sit tall with your feet on the floor.
- 2** Keep your head up and look straight ahead.
- 3** Raise your arms straight out in front of you.
- 4** Lean slightly forward. Keep your back straight. Bend from the hips, not the waist.
- 5** Press your weight through your heels and slowly rise to a standing position.
- 6** Sit back down, slowly lowering your tailbone onto the chair. Try not to let your knees come forward past your toes.
- 7** Do 8–12 times.

To make it easier: Keep your hands on your thighs as you stand and sit.

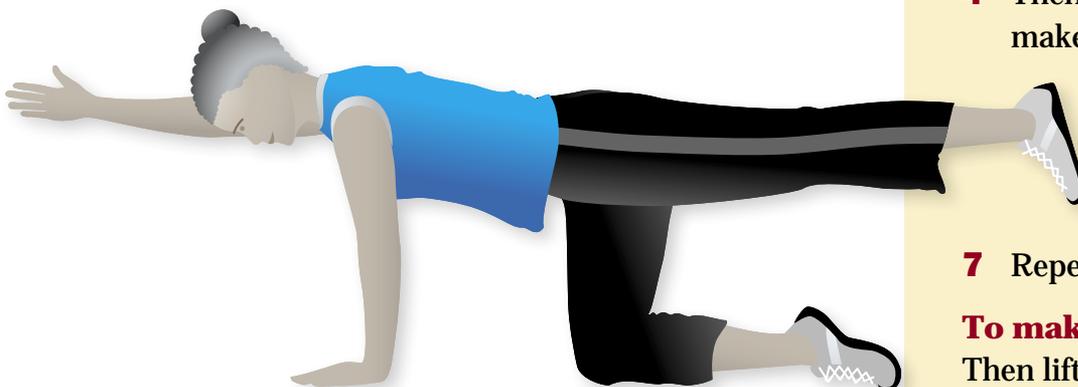
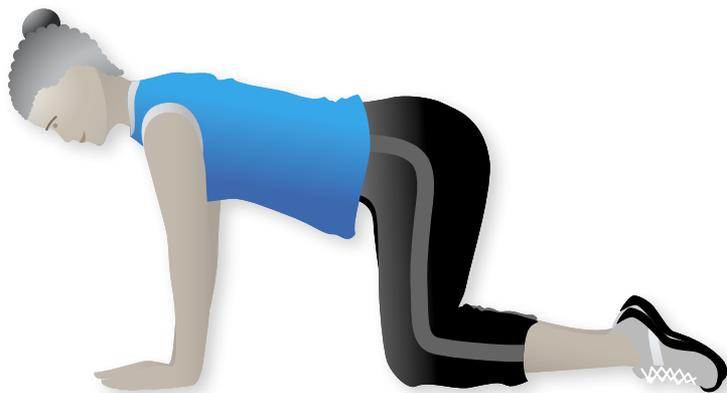
To make it harder: Stop before your buttocks touch the chair. Then slowly stand up again.

Strengthen Your Back

You can help prevent low back pain by strengthening the muscles in your pelvis, abdomen, hips, back, chest, shoulders, and neck. They are also called the core muscles. Strong core muscles help you lift and carry things more safely. And they help you keep your balance and reduce the risk of falling.

Breathing

Breathing is an important part of core exercises. When you hold your abdominal muscles tight, keep breathing. Holding your breath can raise your blood pressure. You can learn how to do core exercises and deep breathing in a Pilates class.



Arm and Leg Lifts

This strengthens your lower back and abdomen.

- 1** Get on the floor on your hands and knees.
- 2** Tighten your abdomen and keep your back straight. Remember to breathe.
- 3** Lift one arm forward so that it makes a straight line with your back.
- 4** Then, lift the opposite leg back so that it makes a straight line with your back.
- 5** Lower your arm and leg back to the floor.
- 6** Do each set 8–12 times.
- 7** Repeat with your other arm and leg.

To make it easier: Lift and lower one arm. Then lift and lower the opposite leg.



Warrior One

This strengthens your core, leg, and buttock muscles. It also stretches your knees, ankles, hips, and shoulders.

- 1** Stand tall with one foot far ahead of the other foot.
- 2** Point your front foot forward and your back foot a little to the side.
- 3** Bend your front knee forward. Do not let your knee go beyond your toes.
- 4** Lift your arms high. Keep your shoulders and hips facing forward.
- 5** Hold your abdomen in and take 5 deep breaths.

Abdominal Lean Back

This strengthens your abdomen and helps prevent back strain.

- 1** Hold your abdomen tight throughout the exercise, but keep breathing.
- 2** Sit tall toward the front of a sturdy chair.
- 3** Place your feet hip-width apart.
- 4** Hold your arms straight out in front of you.
- 5** Breathe in, tuck in your navel, and round your spine as you lean back.
- 6** Breathe out as you sit up and straighten your back.
- 7** Do 8–12 times.

To make it harder: Sit closer to the edge of the chair and lean back farther.

Stay Flexible

Stretching helps you stay flexible so it is easier to reach, bend, stand up, and sit down. Stretching helps your muscles relax and helps prevent aching joints and sore muscles. Stretch after you do aerobics or strength activities.

How to Stretch

- Stretch when your muscles are warmed up.
- Stretching should not hurt. Move into and out of the stretch slowly.
- Hold the stretch for 15–30 seconds. Breathe normally. Do not bounce.



Hamstring Stretch

This stretches the backs of your thighs.

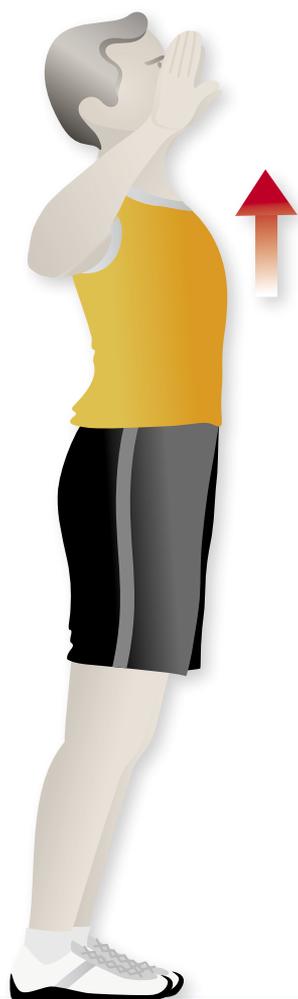
- 1 Lie on the floor with both legs bent.
- 2 Raise one leg up to the ceiling and straighten it.
- 3 Point and flex your foot.
- 4 Then slowly lower the leg.
- 5 Do 3 times with each leg.

To make it harder: Keep both legs straight.

Right-Angle Stretch

This stretches your lower back, hamstring, and calf muscles.

- 1 Bend forward from your hips. Put both hands on a counter or the back of a chair.
- 2 Walk your legs back until your arms are straight. Keep your knees straight but not locked.
- 3 Flatten your back and push your buttocks backwards. Hold 15–30 seconds.
- 4 Walk toward the chair and stand up slowly.
- 5 Do 3 times.



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Chest Stretch

This stretches your chest, shoulders, and upper back.

- 1** Sit or stand tall. Hold your arms out to the side with your elbows bent.
- 2** Slowly lift your chest toward the ceiling as you pull your elbows toward your back.
- 3** Hold 15–30 seconds, breathing normally.
- 4** Return to start position.
- 5** Do 3 times.

Calf Stretch

This stretches your lower legs and ankles.

- 1** Stand with both hands on a counter or sturdy chair.
- 2** Slide one foot back until you feel a stretch in the back of your lower leg.
- 3** Keep the heel on the floor.
- 4** Bend your front knee a little.
- 5** Hold 15–30 seconds, breathing normally.
- 6** Do 3 times on each side.

Fit as You Sit

You can do the exercises on these 2 pages even if it is hard for you to stand. You can also do them when you watch TV or work at a desk. If these are hard for you, ask your doctor for a referral to a physical therapist who can help you find activities you can do.

Exercises for Hands

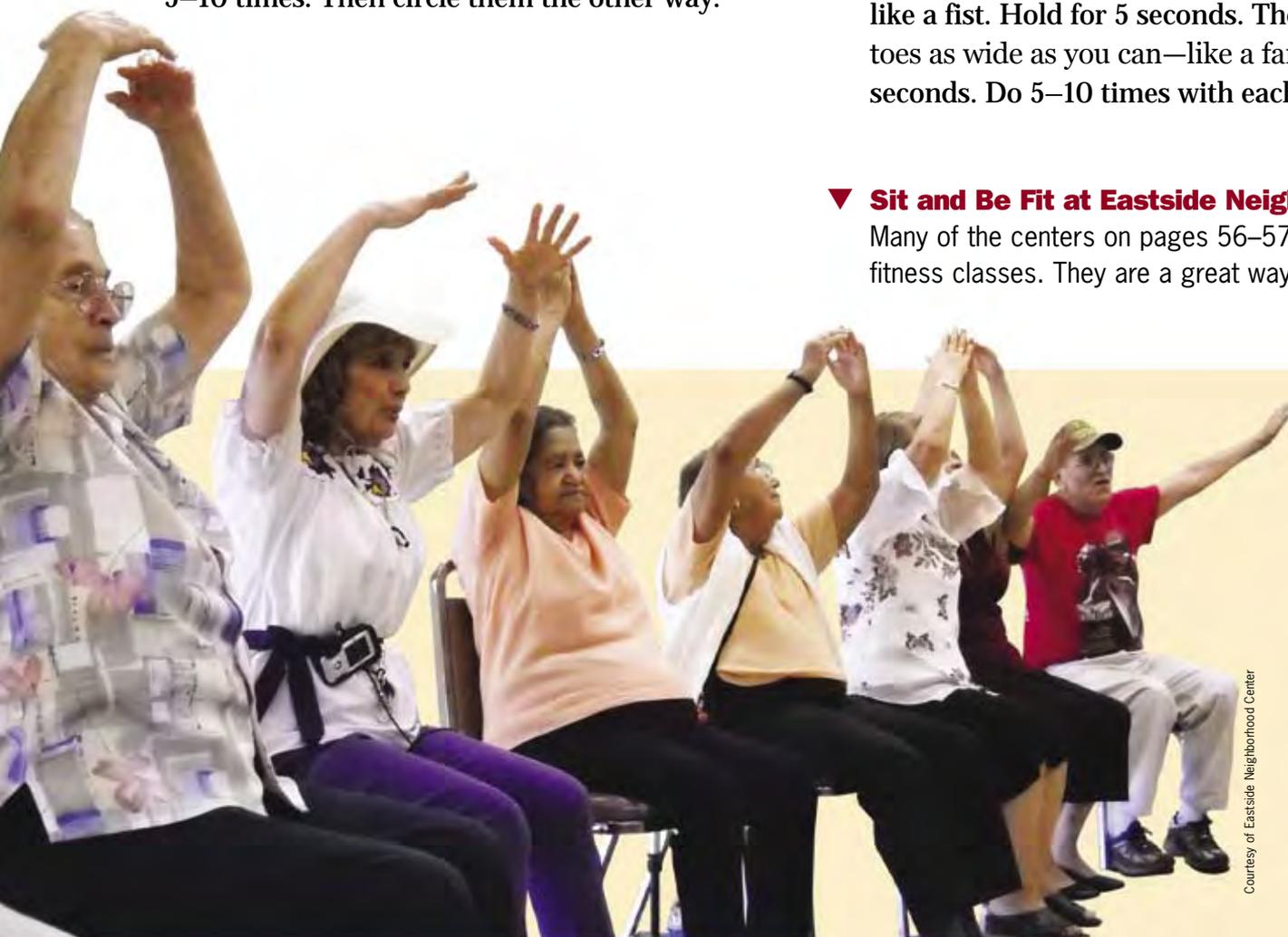
- **Fist and fan:** Squeeze your hands into fists. Hold for 5 seconds. Then spread your fingers as wide as you can—like a fan. Hold for 5 seconds. Do 5–10 times.
- **Wrist circles:** Hold your hands straight out in front of you. Circle both wrists in one direction 5–10 times. Then circle them the other way.

Exercises for Feet

- **Ankle circles:** Lift one foot. Circle it 5 times in each direction. Repeat with the other foot.
- **Point and flex:** Point your toes away from you for 5 seconds. Then pull them back toward you (flex) for 5 seconds. Do 5–10 times with each foot.
- **Squeeze and fan:** Squeeze your toes together like a fist. Hold for 5 seconds. Then spread your toes as wide as you can—like a fan. Hold for 5 seconds. Do 5–10 times with each foot.

▼ Sit and Be Fit at Eastside Neighborhood Center

Many of the centers on pages 56–57 have sitting fitness classes. They are a great way to get started.



Courtesy of Eastside Neighborhood Center



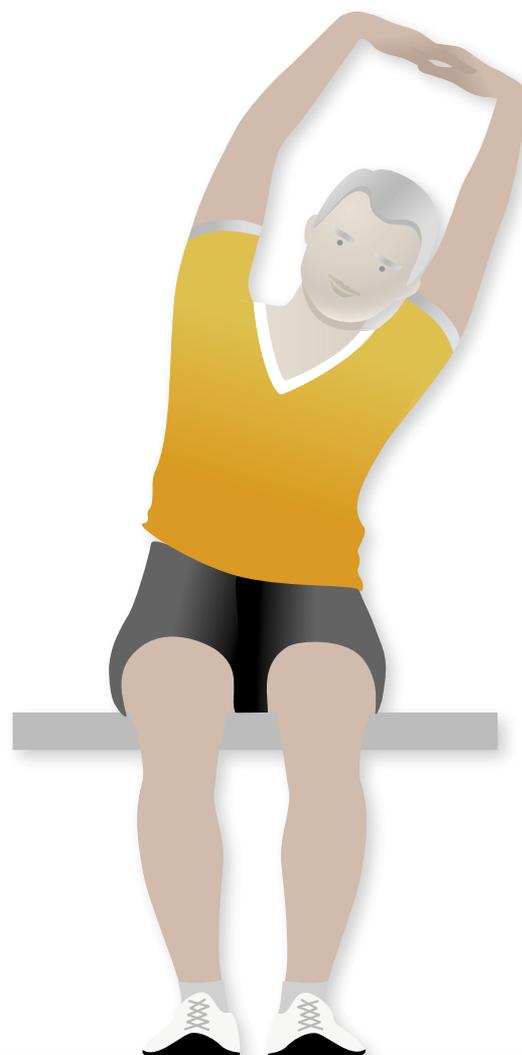
Leg Lift

This strengthens the front of your thighs.

- 1** Sit tall.
- 2** Raise one foot straight out in front of you.
- 3** Keep the back of your thighs touching the chair.
- 4** Return your foot to the floor.
- 5** Do 8–12 times on each side.

More Seated Strength Exercises:

- The **Arm Curls** on page 44.
- The **Side Arm Raises** on page 45.
- The **Abdominal Lean Back** on page 49.



Seated Overhead Stretch

This stretches your arms, back, and sides.

- 1** Sit tall.
- 2** Lift your arms and rib cage up.
- 3** Clasp your hands and reach up to one side.
- 4** Hold 15–30 seconds, breathing normally.
- 5** Do 3 times on each side.

More Seated Stretches:

- The **Chest Stretch** on page 51.

Find the Resource You Need

The following pages list many resources in Santa Clara County. Many of these resources are also available in northern San Benito County. For more referrals, use the general resources listed on this page.

- ☞ Means there are services or information in Spanish.
- Many resources have local numbers. If you are calling from outside the area code, there may be a long distance fee.
- Toll-free phone numbers begin with **1-800**, **1-866**, **1-877**, and **1-888**. There is no cost to call them.

Help for Seniors in Santa Clara County

Council on Aging Silicon Valley	Help finding programs and services for older adults in Santa Clara County	☞ 1-800-510-2020 www.coasiliconvalley.com
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Help for Seniors in San Benito County

Seniors Council of Santa Cruz and San Benito	Help finding programs and services for older adults in San Benito County	☞ 1-800-510-2020 www.seniorscouncil.org
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Call 211 for General Information

211	Information on health and human services, 24 hours a day, in 140 languages	☞ 2-1-1 www.211scc.org
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Help with Transportation

511 Transit	Information on public transportation and paratransit; website has information in Chinese as well as Spanish	5-1-1 ☞ www.511.org
Heart of the Valley	Volunteer program that helps people 59+ with transportation in western Santa Clara County	408-241-1571
OUTREACH	Transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities	☞ 408-436-2865 www.outreach1.org

Call 911 in an Emergency

911	Get emergency help	☞ 9-1-1
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Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Parks offer many different activities, such as hiking, biking, boating, swimming, tennis, dog walking, and horseback riding.

Parks

Call your city recreation department for more information

California State Parks	Information on all state parks	1-800-777-0369 www.parks.ca.gov
Santa Clara County Parks	Information on Santa Clara County parks	408-355-2200 www.parkhere.org
San Jose Parks	Information on San Jose parks	 408-535-3570 www.sjpark.org

Hikes, Bikes, and Trails

Call your city recreation department for more information

511 Transit Bicycling Guide	Find bike trails in your area	5-1-1  http://bicycling.511.org
Healthy Trails Challenge	Receive a gift when you hike 5 trails in a year	408-355-2201 www.parkhere.org
San Jose Bike Trail Map	Free map of San Jose bike routes	408-975-3206 www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation
Sierra Club	Find group hikes in your area	650-390-8411  www.lomapieta.sierraclub.org
Walking (AARP)	Walking tips and ideas	www.aarp.org/health/fitness/walking

Low-Cost Golf Courses

Golf Link	Public and private golf courses	www.golflink.com/golf-courses
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Swimming Pools

See pages 56–57 for more sites with pools

Betty Wright Swim Center/ Abilities United	Therapeutic pool and water fitness classes	650-494-1480 www.abilitiesunited.org
Swimmers Guide	Find pools in your area	www.swimmersguide.com
Timpany Center	Warm-water pool open to the public	 408-283-9036 www.timpanycenter.org

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Community and Senior Centers

These centers offer many programs in addition to the activities listed here.

- Call for schedules, fees, services in other languages, and programs for people with chronic conditions.
- For a complete list of senior centers, call **1-800-510-2020**. Most provide low-cost lunch programs.
- 🇪🇵 This symbol means that the center tries to provide assistance in Spanish.

Santa Clara County		Call for information about meal programs and other services							
Name	Aerobics & dance	Walking groups	Strength & weights	Pool	Tai Chi	Yoga	Pilates	Phone Number/Website	
Campbell Adult Center	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	🇪🇵 408-866-2146	
Cupertino Senior Center	✓		✓		✓	✓		408-777-3150 www.cupertino.org/senior	
Cupertino DeAnza Community College Pool				✓				408-446-3222	
Gilroy Senior Center	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	🇪🇵 408-846-0460	
Los Gatos Senior Center	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	408-354-1514 www.lgsrecreation.org	
Los Gatos Jewish Community Center	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	🇪🇵 408-357-7499 www.svjcc.org	
Milpitas Senior Center	✓	✓	✓		✓			🇪🇵 408-586-2775	
Milpitas Sports Center	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	🇪🇵 408-586-3225 www.ci.milpitas.ca.org	
Milpitas India Community Center	✓		✓			✓	✓	408-934-1130 www.indiacc.org	
Morgan Hill Aquatics Center	✓			✓				🇪🇵 408-782-2134 www.mhaquaticscenter.com	
Morgan Hill Centennial Recreation Senior Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	🇪🇵 408-782-1284 www.mhcrc.com	
Mtn View Eagle Park Pool				✓				🇪🇵 650-903-6413	
Mtn View-Los Altos Adult Ed Center	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	🇪🇵 650-940-1333 www.mvlaae.net	
Palo Alto Avenidas	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	🇪🇵 650-289-5400 www.avenidas.org	
Santa Clara Community Recreation Center	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	408-615-3140 www.santaclaraca.gov	

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Name	Aerobics & dance	Walking groups	Strength & weights	Pool	Tai Chi	Yoga	Pilates	Phone Number/Website
Santa Clara Senior Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	☎ 408-615-3170
Saratoga Senior Center	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	408-868-1257
Sunnyvale Senior Center	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	☎ 408-730-7360
Sunnyvale Generations	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	☎ 408-736-8326
YMCA of Silicon Valley (many sites)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	☎ 408-351-6400 www.ymcasv.org

San Jose		For information visit www.sanjoseca.gov/prns						
Almaden Community Ctr	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	☎ 408-268-1133
Asian Americans for Community Involvement	✓	✓			✓			☎ 408-975-2730 x 117
Berryessa Community Ctr	✓	✓			✓	✓		☎ 408-251-6392
Camden Community Center and Pool	✓		✓	✓		✓		☎ 408-559-8553
Cypress Senior Center	✓	✓	✓		✓			☎ 408-244-1353
Evergreen Senior Center	✓				✓	✓		408-270-2220
Gardner Community Ctr		✓	✓	✓				408-277-4761
Grace Community Center	✓	✓				✓		408-293-0422
Indian Health Center	✓	✓	✓		✓			☎ 408-445-3400
Iola Williams Senior Center	✓	✓	✓					☎ 408-292-6592
John XXIII Center	✓				✓			☎ 408-282-8600
Kirk Senior Center	✓	✓				✓		408-269-0214
Mayfair Community Center	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	☎ 408-794-1060
Northside Community Ctr	✓				✓	✓		☎ 408-794-7500
Roosevelt Community Ctr	✓					✓		☎ 408-794-7555
Southside Senior Center	✓		✓		✓			☎ 408-629-3435
St. James Senior Center	✓				✓	✓		408-277-4194
West Community Center	✓					✓	✓	408-249-6580
Willow Glen Community Ctr	✓	✓						408-448-6400
Yu-Ai Kai	✓		✓		✓	✓		☎ 408-294-2505

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Food, Nutrition, and Gardening

Farmers Markets

California Farmers Markets	Buy fresh local fruits and vegetables	www.cafarmersmarkets.com
Pacific Coast Farmers Markets	Buy fresh local fruits and vegetables	www.pcfma.com

Food and Meal Programs **Most senior centers on pages 56–57 have free or low-cost meals**

211	Information on food and meal programs for people of all ages	 2-1-1
Council on Aging Silicon Valley	Information on food and meal programs for seniors	 1-800-510-2020 www.coasiliconvalley.com
Food Connection Hotline	Referrals to local food programs	 1-800-984-3663 www.secondharvestfood.org
Meals on Wheels—Health Trust	Home-delivered meals for seniors	 408-350-3247

Information on Nutrition

American Heart Association	Information on healthy eating	 1-800-242-8721  www.americanheart.org
Nutrition.gov	Information on nutrition and food safety	 www.nutrition.gov

Gardening

Master Gardener Helpline	Advice and information for Santa Clara gardeners	 408-282-3105 www.mastergardeners.org
Our City Forest	Information and help to plant street trees	 408-998-7337 www.ourcityforest.org
San Jose Community Gardens	Start your own plot at one of San Jose's 18 community gardens	 408-793-4165 www.sjcommunitygardens.org

Health Information and Assistance

General Health Information

American Podiatric Medical Association	Information on foot health	 www.apma.org
Medline Plus	Health information on many topics	 1-888-346-3656  www.medlineplus.gov
My Family Health Portrait	Create a family health history	 www.hhs.gov/familyhistory
National Institute on Aging	Information on many health issues	 1-800-222-2225 www.nihseniorhealth.gov
Physical Activity Guidelines	The latest research and advice on exercise	www.health.gov/paguidelines
PlaneTree Health Library	Individual help finding health information	 408-358-5667  www.planetreesanjose.org

Chronic Conditions

American Chronic Pain Association	Information on coping with chronic pain	 1-800-533-3231  www.theacpa.org
American Diabetes Association	Information and services to prevent and treat diabetes	 408-241-1922  www.diabetes.org
American Heart Association	Information and services to prevent and treat heart disease	 408-977-4950  www.americanheart.org
American Lung Association	Information and services to prevent and treat lung disease	 1-800-548-8252  www.lungusa.org
National Arthritis Foundation	Information and services for people with arthritis	 1-800-464-6240  www.arthritis.org
National Center on Physical Disability and Fitness	Information on fitness for people with disabilities	 1-800-900-8086 www.ncpad.org
Road to Healthier Living Program (The Health Trust)	Workshops on managing chronic conditions like diabetes, asthma, and arthritis	 408-961-9877

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Health Care Services

Emergencies

911	Call in an emergency	☎ 9-1-1
Adult Protective Services	Report abuse of an older adult	☎ 408-975-4900
Suicide and Crisis Hotline	Call for help 24 hours a day	☎ 1-800-784-2433

Hospitals

Many hospitals offer classes and programs for the public

Gilroy Saint Louise Regional Hospital	☎ 408-848-2000
Los Gatos El Camino Hospital	☎ 408-378-6131
Mountain View El Camino Hospital	☎ 650-940-7000
Palo Alto Stanford Hospital and Clinics	☎ 650-723-4000
San Jose Good Samaritan Hospital	☎ 408-559-2011
San Jose Kaiser Permanente	☎ 408-972-3000
San Jose O'Connor Hospital	☎ 408-947-2500
San Jose Regional Medical Center	☎ 408-259-5000
San Jose Santa Clara Valley Medical Center	☎ 408-885-5000
Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente	☎ 408-851-1000

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Mental Health Care

Santa Clara County Mental Health Services	County mental health services	☎ 1-800-704-0900 www.sccgov.org/portal/site/mhd
Friendship Line	Emotional support, grief counseling, and referrals for older adults	1-800-971-0016
Mental Health America	Mental health information and referrals	1-916-557-1167 (California) ☎ 1-800-969-6642 (National) ☎ www.nmha.org

Community Clinics and Health Care for People Without Insurance

Asian Americans for Community Involvement	Clinic in San Jose	☎ 408-975-2763 www.aaci.org
Gardner Family Health Network	Clinics in Alviso, Gilroy, Mountain View, and San Jose	☎ 408-918-2682 www.gardnerfamilyhealth.com
Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley	Clinic in San Jose	☎ 408-445-3400 www.indianhealthcenter.org
MayView Community Health Centers	Clinics in Mountain View, Palo Alto, and Sunnyvale	☎ 650-965-3323 (Mountain View) ☎ 650-327-8717 (Palo Alto) ☎ 408-746-0455 (Sunnyvale) www.mayview.org
Ravenswood Family Health Center	Clinic in East Palo Alto	☎ 650-330-7400 www.ravenswoodfhc.org
San Jose Foothill Family Community Clinic	Clinic in San Jose	☎ 408-729-4282
Santa Clara Valley Health System	Santa Clara County clinics	☎ 408-885-5000
Uninsured Help Line	24-hour-a-day information on free or low-cost health care	☎ 1-800-234-1317 ☎ www.coverageforall.org

Medicare

HICAP—Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy	Free information and counseling on Medicare, supplemental insurance, and Part D prescription drug coverage	☎ 1-800-434-0222 www.aging.ca.gov/hicap
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Help for Smoking, Alcohol, or Drug Problems

Alcohol and Drug Services of Santa Clara	Alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment	☎ 1-800-488-9919 ☎ www.sccgov.org/portal/site/dads
AA (Alcoholics Anonymous)	Free support groups for people with alcohol problems	☎ 408-374-8511 ☎ www.aa.org
Al-Anon	Free support groups for families and friends of people with alcohol problems	☎ 408-379-1051 ☎ www.al-anon.org
California Smokers Helpline	Help to stop smoking	☎ 1-800-662-8887 ☎ www.californiasmokershelpline.org

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Learning, Volunteering, and Employment

Adult Education

211	Information on adult education classes	☎ 2-1-1
Exploritas (Elderhostel)	Educational travel programs for people 55+	1-800-454-5768 www.exploritas.org
Metropolitan Adult Education Program (MAEP)	Free or low-cost fitness classes throughout Santa Clara County	☎ 408-723-6450 www.metroed.net/maep.html
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute	Classes for people 50+	408-554-2382 www.scu.edu/osher
SeniorNet Learning Center	Classes on using computers	☎ 408-268-1133 www.snicsj.org

Volunteer Work

SCORE	Volunteers share business skills with small and start-up businesses	408-288-8479 www.svscore.org
Senior Corps Foster Grandparents	Connects volunteers age 55+ with children and youth with special needs	☎ 408-944-0668 www.seniorcorps.gov
Senior Corps RSVP	Find service projects that match your skills	☎ 408-979-7906 S. Santa Clara ☎ 650-696-7660 N. Santa Clara
Senior Corps Senior Companions	Help homebound people with shopping, chores, doctor visits, and companionship	☎ 408-979-7907 www.seniorcorps.gov
Volunteer Center of Silicon Valley	Use this website to find volunteer opportunities	www.vcsv.us
Volunteer Match	Volunteer with non-profit agencies	415-241-6872 www.volunteermatch.org

Employment

Senior Employment Training and Placement Program	Job counseling, training, and placement for people 55+ who have low incomes	☎ 408-296-8290 www.coasiliconvalley.com
Work 2 Future	Employment services for people in Santa Clara County	☎ 408-794-1100 ☎ www.work2future.biz

Resources for Seniors and Caregivers

Caregiving Help

Alzheimer's Association	Information and support 24 hours a day	☎ 650-962-8111 🌐 www.alz.org/norcal/
Alzheimer's Activity Center	Social, health, and recreational activities	☎ 408-279-7515 www.alzdaycare.org
Centre for Living with Dying	End-of-life and grief counseling and support	☎ 408-243-0222 www.billwilsoncenter.org/thecentre
CODA Alliance	Information on Advance Directives	www.codaalliance.org
Council on Aging Silicon Valley	Help finding services for seniors and caregivers	☎ 1-800-510-2020 www.coasiliconvalley.com
Family Caregiver Alliance	Information and resources for caregivers	☎ 1-800-445-8106 🌐 www.caregiver.org
Hospice of the Valley	End-of-life care and grief support	☎ 408-559-5600 www.hospicevalley.org
Share the Care	How to organize a group to care for someone who is seriously ill	www.sharethecare.org

Grandparenting

AARP Grandparent Website	Information for grandparents	www.aarp.org/family/grandparenting
Kinship Resource Center	Free help for grandparents who are raising their grandchildren	☎ 408-200-0980

Legal Aid

Senior Adults Legal Assistance (SALA)	Free legal services for Santa Clara County residents age 60+	☎ 408-295-5991 www.sala.org
California Senior Legal Hotline	Free legal advice, assistance, and education for seniors	☎ 1-800-222-1753 🌐 www.seniorlegalhotline.org

Home Safety and Fall Prevention

Home Safety Resources

Avenidas	Low-cost handyman services for older adults in northern Santa Clara County	☎ 650-289-5400 www.avenidas.org/services/handyman
AT Network	Tools to help people with disabilities	☎ 1-800-390-2699 ☎ www.atnet.org
California Telephone Access Program	Free phone equipment for seniors and people with disabilities	☎ 1-800-806-1191 ☎ www.ddtp.org
Heart of the Valley	Volunteer program helps people 59+ with chores and repairs	408-241-1571
Home Safety Council	Tips to make your home safer	www.homesafetycouncil.org
Home Safety Services	Fee-based home safety advice and services	650-571-7774 www.homesafety.net
PG&E Energy Line	In-home services and improvements to insulate the house and lower PG&E bills	☎ 1-800-933-9555 ☎ www.pge.com
Rebuilding Together: Neighbor-to-Neighbor Program	Free help with home safety repairs for people with low incomes	☎ 408-578-9519 www.rebuildingtogether-sv.org
Silicon Valley Independent Living Center	Helps people with physical, mental, or emotional disabilities live independently	☎ 408-894-9041 ☎ www.svilc.org
Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired	Ideas and support for living with vision loss	☎ 1-800-660-2009 www.vistacenter.org

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Fall Prevention

Also ask your local senior center about balance classes

Fall Prevention	Information and local resources	www.smcfallprevention.org
Farewell to Falls	A free fall prevention program for people 65+	650-724-9369
Stopfalls	Information on preventing falls	www.stopfalls.org

Home Safety Checklist

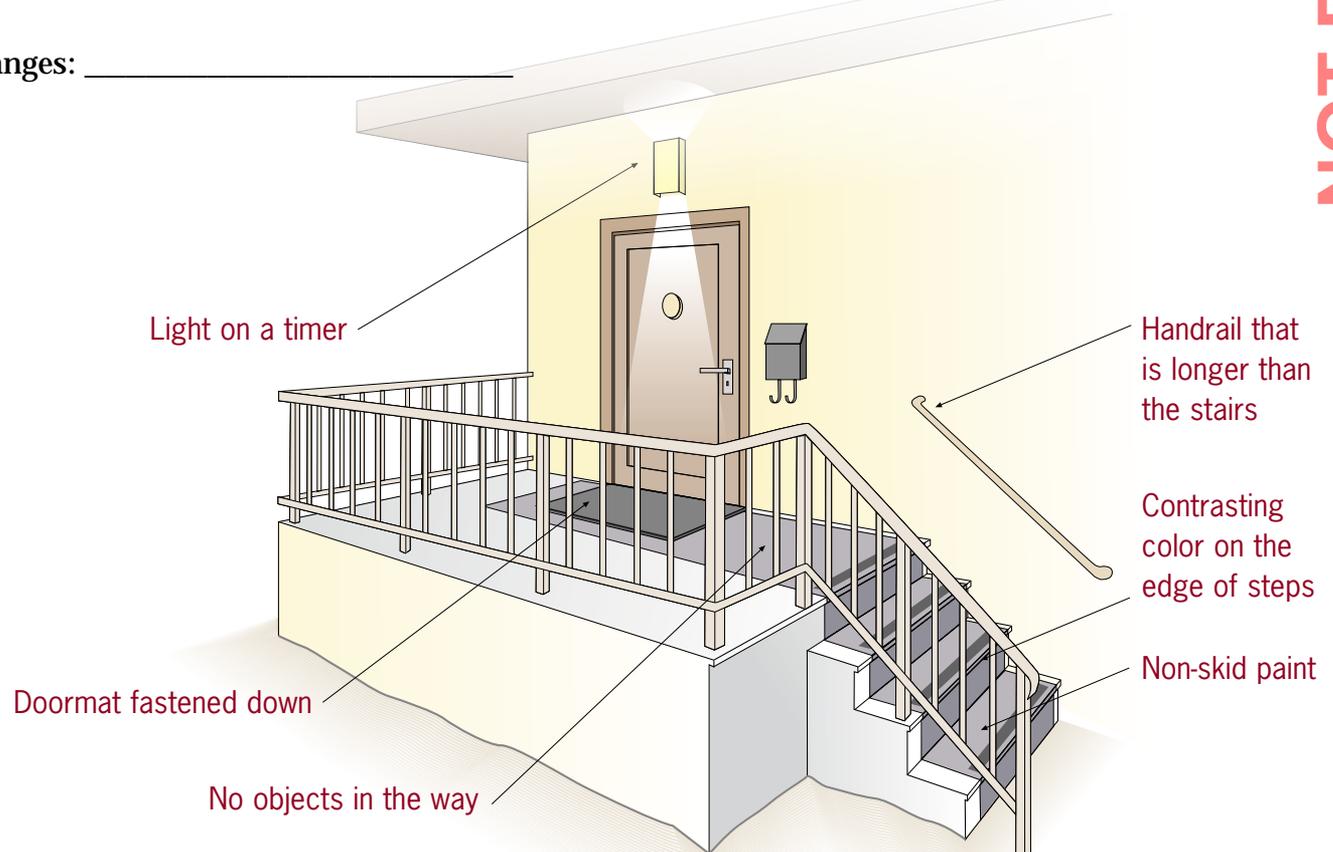
Use this checklist to take a careful look around your home. Put a check by any changes you would like to make. See page 64 for local groups that can help you put in grab bars or make other safety changes.

Entrances

- Use brighter lights.
- Put the light on a timer or motion sensor.
- Install a handrail on the stairs.
- Paint the steps and porch with non-skid paint.
- Paint the edges of steps a different color, or put colored or textured tape on the edges.
- Remove clutter from the steps and porch.
- Use a non-skid doormat.
- Repair uneven, broken, or loose steps or flooring.
- Other changes: _____

Inside Stairs

- Use brighter lights.
- Put a light switch at both ends of the stairway.
- Install handrails on both sides of the stairs.
- Replace torn or lumpy carpet with a non-slip surface. Or use light-color carpet with a low pile.
- Mark the top and bottom steps with colored tape.
- Repair loose, cracked, or broken steps.
- Remove all clutter from stairs.
- Other changes: _____



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Home Safety Checklist

Hallways

- Use brighter lights.
- Put a light switch at both ends.
- Clear clutter off the floor.
- Repair or replace loose or torn rugs or carpets.
- Repair or replace loose or broken flooring.
- Other changes: _____

Living Area

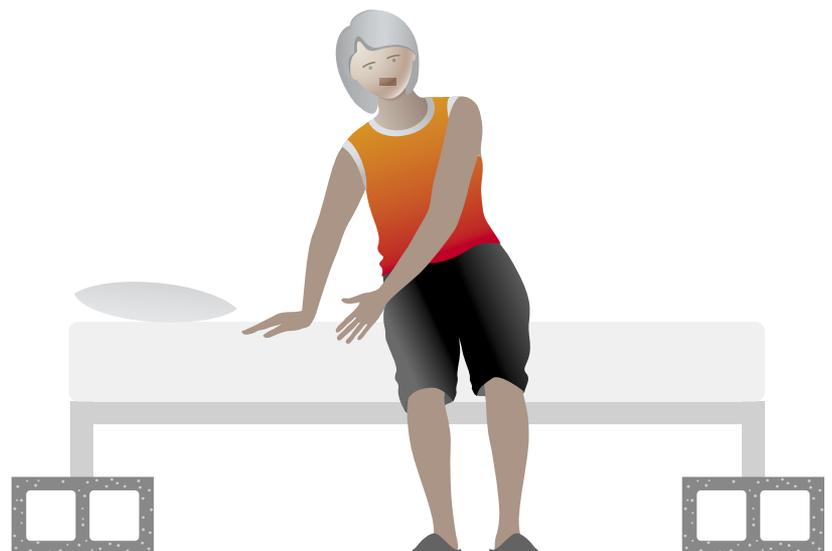
- Use brighter lights.
- Put a light switch or a lamp near the entrance.
- Clear clutter off the floor.
- Tape or coil electric cords along the wall or under furniture.
- Remove area rugs or tape the edges down with rug tape.
- Replace shag carpets with low-pile carpets.
- Repair loose or broken flooring.
- Repair or replace loose or torn rugs or carpets.
- Clear wide paths between rooms.
- If you use furniture for support, make sure it is sturdy.
- Put risers under the legs of chairs that are too low to get in and out of easily.
- Other changes: _____

Bedrooms

- Use brighter lights.
- Clear a path from the bed to the bathroom.
- Put a nightlight near the bed.
- Keep a phone and flashlight by the bed.
- Put a light switch near the door, so you don't have to walk into a dark room.
- Clear clutter off the floor.
- Repair loose or broken flooring.
- Repair or replace loose or torn rugs or carpets.
- Tape or coil electric cords along the wall or under furniture.
- Put risers under the legs of the bed if it is too low to get in and out of easily.
- Other changes: _____

▼ Raise a Low Bed

You can use wooden blocks or cinder blocks to make low beds and chairs higher.



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Kitchen

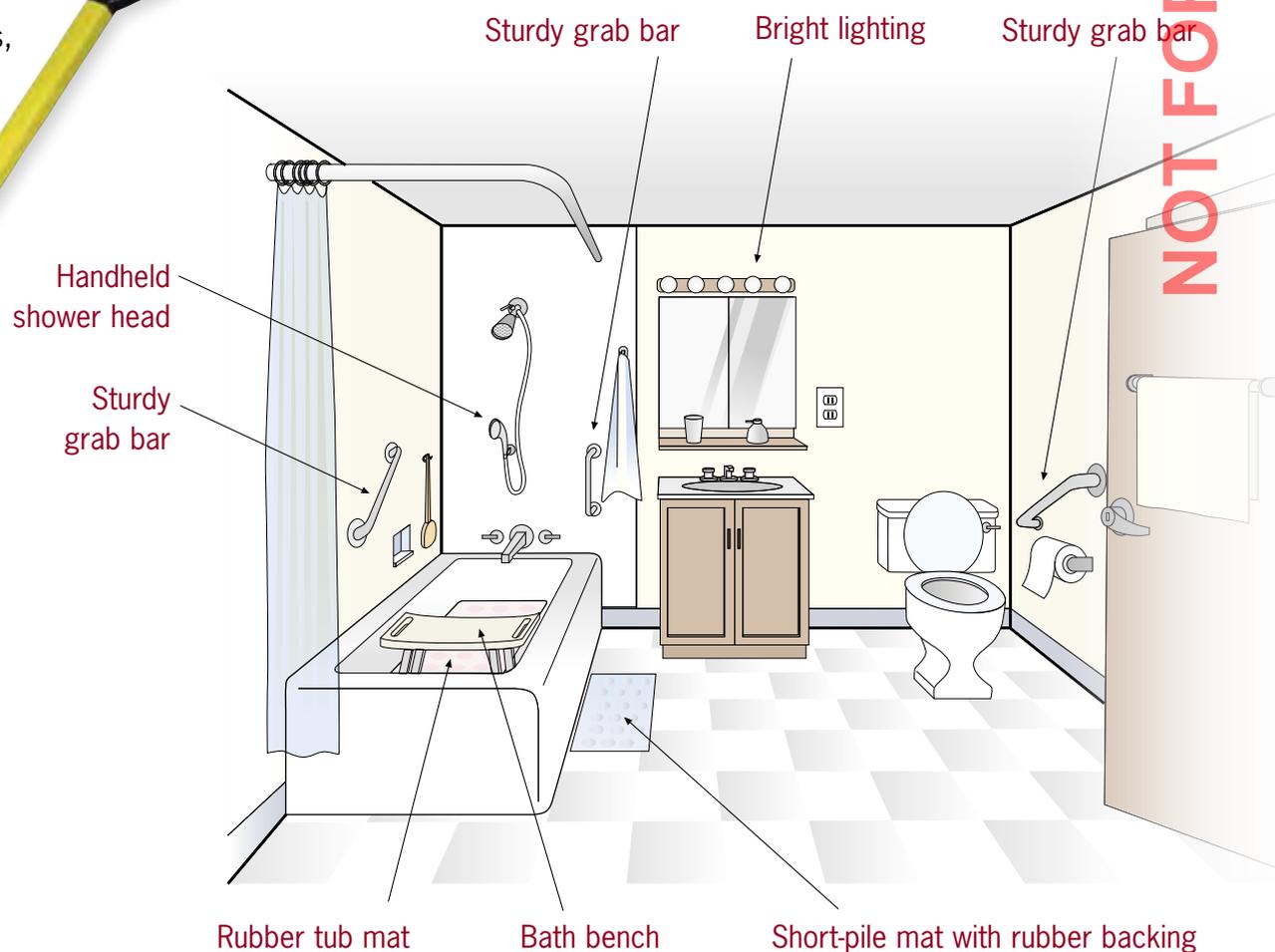
- Use brighter lights.
- Clear clutter off the floor.
- Repair loose or broken tiles or linoleum.
- Move things to lower shelves so you can reach them more easily.
- Use non-skid backing on any rugs.
- Use non-skid floor wax.
- Other changes: _____

Bathroom

- Use brighter lights.
- Get a bath mat with a non-skid backing.
- Keep electric cords away from water.
- Fix loose or broken flooring.
- Put a rubber mat in the tub or shower.
- Install a grab bar in the tub or shower.
- Get a bench and a handheld shower head for the tub or shower.
- Install a grab bar by the toilet.
- Other changes: _____

► Help Reaching High or Low

With a grabber like this, you can reach things more easily. Most hardware stores sell grabbers.



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The University of California, Berkeley

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Let's make Silicon Valley the healthiest region in America.



Healthy Steps in Silicon Valley

“Healthy Steps is a great resource for my patients who are over 50. It makes being active both easy and fun.”—Physician

“Before my surgery, I did lots of things I can’t do now. Healthy Steps shows me new ways to be active, at home and in my neighborhood.”—Jim in San Jose

“People can use Healthy Steps in many different ways. Look at the photos to get inspired. Read the tips to get ideas. Use the resources to find activities and help.”
—Community Center Director

“I’ve been so busy taking care of my mom after her fall that I haven’t had any time to exercise. Healthy Steps shows me how I can fit more physical activity into my life. It also shows me how I can help my mom build strength and balance.”—Maria in Gilroy



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