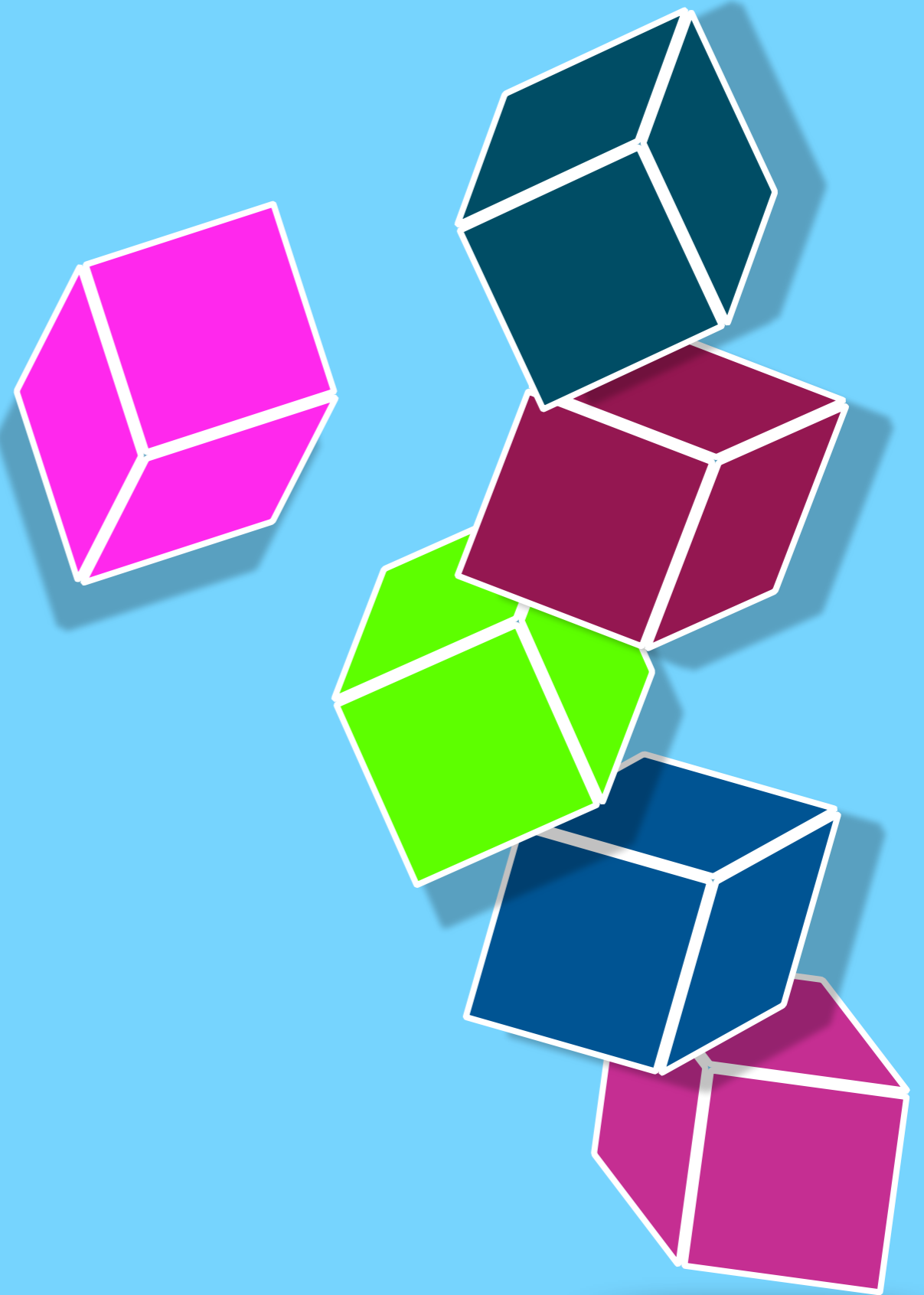


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THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT CHANGES YOU SHOULD START TODAY TO PREVENT FALLS

...As You Age

by Certified Personal Trainer;
Senior Exercise Consultant;
Joy Fletcher from
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Facts About Falling

- **Falls and injuries** are the second leading cause of unintentional injury or death worldwide. (According to the WHO–World Health Organization)
- **Most falls happen** with a slip or a trip at ground level.
- **Falling down stairs** account for about 1 million injuries every year in the U.S., as well as 12,000 deaths.
- **Women fall more than men** and account for 3/4's of the hip fractures. Women who begin to lose bone mass in their 40s and 50s are at risk for developing osteoporosis. This increases their risk of a hip fracture when they do fall.
- **Inside the home** is the most common place for adults over the age of 65 to fall. This is due to older adults spending more time indoors and increased frailty.
- **They're not inevitable.** That's the good news! Although falls with serious injuries are common, they are preventable. Keep reading to find out how.

THERE ARE OVER 200 RISK FACTORS FOR FALLS

THEY FALL INTO 2 MAIN CATEGORIES OR SUBGROUPS

EXTRINSIC FACTORS:

- Weather Conditions
- House Clutter & Obstacles
- Poor Lighting
- Lack of Adaptive Devices
- Inappropriate Clothing or Footwear

INTRINSIC FACTORS:

- History of Falling
- Chronic & Acute Medical Conditions
- Sensory &/or Vestibular Impairment
- Medication Effects
- Poor Nutrition
- Functional Level, (Joint Mobility, Muscle Function, Balance & Gait)

There is no doubt that we have a greater risk of falling as we get older. From age 65 & beyond, your risk increases significantly. What most people don't realize however, is a number of intrinsic risk factors (what happens within the body) begin to increase your risk of falling, way before you reach the age of 65.

For that reason, it was important for us at Agile 4 Life Fitness to find the intrinsic risk factors, that if amended, would give adults the most improvement when it came to decreasing risks of falls as they aged. Here's how we made our choices.

- We collected feedback from hundreds of older adults who have used our training methods to see what they said helped them the most to improve their balance.
- We studied the most up-to-date, science-based evidence on functional aging and fall prevention.
- We took into consideration our own fitness experiences and how we've had to change and adapt from decade to decade as we are getting older.

When we analyzed our data, the 3 changes that definitely give someone the best return on their investment for preventing falls, no matter their age...

THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT CHANGES

You Can Start Today

TO PREVENT FALLS

1. IMPROVE YOUR POSTURE
2. STRENGTHEN YOUR CORE MUSCLES
3. GET UP & MOVE MORE

#1 Important Change

IMPROVE YOUR POSTURE

- Forward head posture - when head is positioned forward & ears are in front of vertical midline.
- Kyphosis - when the upper back is rounded & shoulders roll forward.
- Swayback - when hips & pelvic tilt forward in front of midline.
- Flatback - when the normal curve of the lower back looks straight.

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Improving posture is the first change and the most important. Proper posture alignment is crucial for balance. With better balance comes more stability. So there is less chance of a fall if there is a slip, trip or a bump.

PROPER POSTURE BENEFITS

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- Improves other intrinsic factors.
- Optimizes lung capacity & circulation increasing energy levels.
- Improves organ system function.
- Minimizes muscle imbalances that can cause joint misalignment & pain.
- Helps prevent strains & overuse problems.
- Helps prevent back & neck pain.

MORE ABOUT POSTURE

One of the most visually noticeable indicators of overall muscle weakness.

Uncorrected Posture Changes Your Center-of-Balance:

- Most often it shifts the balance too far forward.
- The forward shift pulls the body toward the ground increasing fall risk.
- The head and neck can also shift forward straining the neck muscles.
- This can cause headaches, jaw, shoulder, upper and lower back pain.
- It causes the rib cage to restrict the diaphragm and reduces lung capacity.
- This restriction causes overall fatigue, lack of energy and decreases a body's desire to be active.
- Less movement or activity causes loss of muscle strength, especially in the core, and the risk of falls continues to increase.

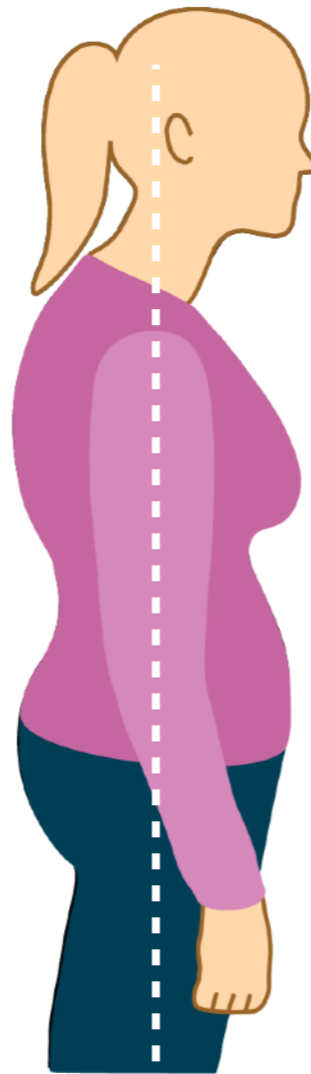
HOW TO BEGIN

To Practice Correct Posture - THINK TALL!

1. Stand with you feet about hip width apart.
2. Pull *TALL* in the rib cage (the torso).
3. Pull the shoulder blades down. This helps slumping shoulders move back into a more neutral position.
4. Squeeze your gluteal muscles (butt muscles). This will help to activate the front abdominals for additional support and shift your hips to be more level.
5. Lastly, bring head and neck back, so ears lines up with the center of your shoulder. Using a mirror to make the alignments can be very helpful.
6. Practice these 5 easy steps often to get the muscles that hold you in proper posture alignment stronger.

**Expert
Tip**

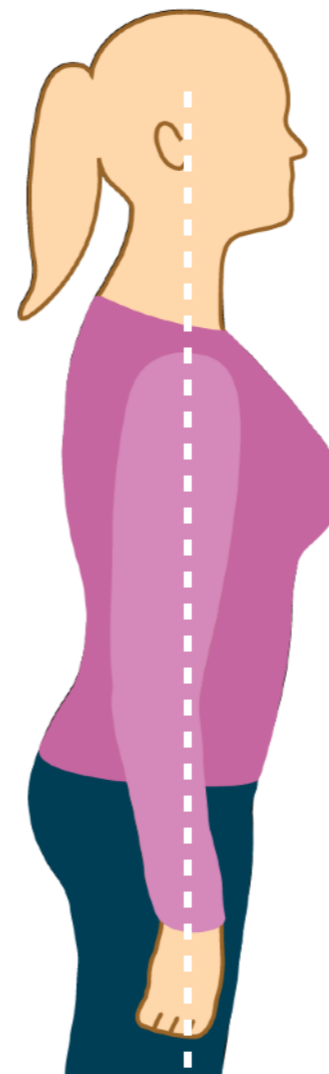
Practicing your posture while walking, helps you strengthen the muscles and improve your posture more quickly.



LEFT: Common Posture in inactive adults

Posture Stance on the Left:

1. Shoulders slumped forward
2. Arms rest too far in front
3. Head/neck shifted too far forward
4. Hips are rotated forward
5. Torso shortened & compressed



RIGHT: Common Posture in an active adult

Posture Stance on the Right:

1. Shoulders are down and neutral
2. Arms rest at the side
3. Head/neck centered over shoulders
4. Hips are level
5. Torso is lifted & supported

#2 Important Change

STRENGTHEN YOUR CORE MUSCLES

- Abdominals - rectus abdominis & transversus abdominis
- Obliques - external & internal
- Back/Spine - erector spinae, multifidus, & quadratus lumborum
- Gluteal muscles (buttocks)
- Pelvic area - hip flexors, hamstrings, abductors

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Your core muscles are the muscles around the torso that move, support, and stabilize the spine, back, buttocks, hips and stomach. They're also some of the same muscles that help support good posture.

BENEFITS OF A STRONGER CORE

- Improves posture.
- Improves balance & stability.
- Protects internal organs.
- Helps protect the back & reduce pain.
- Makes everyday activities easier.
- Enhances flexibility.
- Improves energy levels.

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HOW TO BEGIN

Exercises for Strengthening Core Muscles.

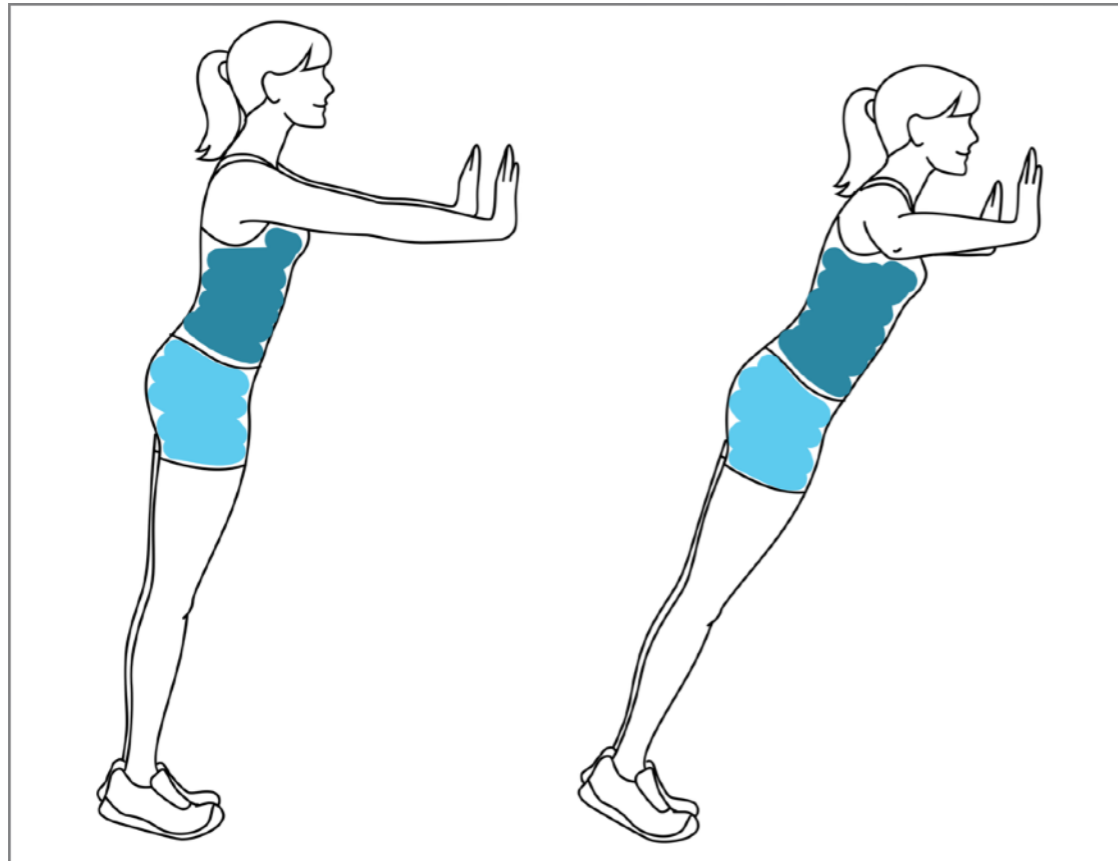
1. Practice the exercise or exercises that work best for you.
2. If you don't feel stable while standing, practice the Seated Pull/Row exercise.
3. If you are comfortable standing, practice the Seated Row/Pull & the Pushup.
4. If you can get up & down off the floor & you feel stable standing, practice all 3 exercises; the Bridge, the Seated Row/Pull & the Pushup.
5. Start by practicing the exercise(s) you can perform. Do the exercise movement 4-8 times (or repetitions). Do 4-8 reps (or 1 set) every other day.
6. When 1 set of 4-8 repetitions becomes easy, try doing 2 sets of 4-8 reps. When that's easy go to 1 set of 8-15 repetitions and when that's easy switch to 2 sets of 8-15 reps to maintain strengthen.

**Expert
Tip**

Muscles develop the way that you train them! To improve posture, practice good posture when doing any exercises.

WALL OR COUNTER PUSHUP

Do not use this exercise if you are unsteady while standing. Only push against something that will NOT move. Standing further away makes the exercise more difficult.



1. Stand, facing a wall or kitchen counter, an arms-length away.
2. For wall: place palms on wall, arms chest width apart & shoulder high. For counter: securely grab the edge of counter, arms chest width apart.
3. Pull tall, keeping torso tight, bend elbows, & slowly lower to the wall or counter, let heels come up.
4. Only lower far enough, so you can push yourself back to start.
5. Repeat 4-15 times (repetitions).

SEATED PULL



The next 2 seated exercises are a good choice if you don't feel very stable while standing.

1. Sit towards the front of a stable chair with 1 leg extended & knee slightly bent.
2. Keep the other leg on the floor with foot flat, to stay stable.
3. Place a large towel* under the instep of the flexed foot of the extended leg.
4. Hold one end of the towel in each hand.
5. Keep the leg & foot tight, sit tall with good posture & gently pull the towel towards you keeping it in a straight line.
6. Using your back muscles, keep shoulders down, & do a sequence of; a gentle pull holding for 5 seconds & then relax.
7. Repeat 4-15 times (repetitions).

**Note: Fold the long side of a large towel so it forms a rope-shape, no wider than 4-inches. Make sure the chair you are using is stable.*

This movement can also be done while sitting on the floor. If you have trouble getting up from the floor or have very tight hamstrings, a chair will give you better results.

SEATED ROW

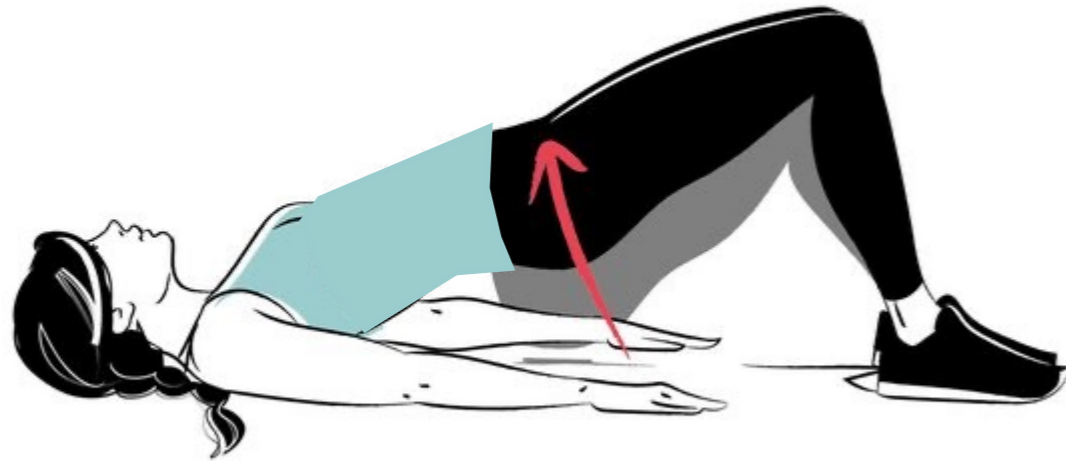


Note: If you have done any physical therapy recently you may have a resistance band at home. If you use it for this exercise, please check to be sure the band will not break with use. This exercise is best done in a stable chair.

Bands can be a great addition to a workout. It's very easy to change the resistance, they are easy on the joints, they come in a variety of strengths, are very compact and transportable.

1. Sit towards the front of a stable chair extend both legs, knees slightly bent.
2. Place the center of the band under the instep of both feet holding one end of the band in each hand.
3. To start: Flex both feet, sit tall with good posture, arms straight in front, shoulders down, & have a slight tension on the band.
4. Pull the elbows straight back while keeping shoulder blades down. Hands should end up in front of the hips on the pull back.
5. Hold the pull for 3 seconds, come back to start.
6. Repeat 4-15 times (repetitions).

BRIDGE



Note: if you have been diagnosed with osteoporosis, please consult your physician or physical therapist to see if this exercise is appropriate for you at this time.

Keeping the abdominal muscles tight during the lift will help keep the back from over arching. It is suggested that older adults keep a straighter back during the exercise.

If you can comfortably get up and down off the floor this is an excellent core strengthen exercise.

1. Lie on your back with knees bent, feet flat on the floor beneath your knees, & arms resting at your side.
2. Tighten your abdominals & glute muscles which will slightly flatten the low back into the floor/mat.
3. Raise your hips off the floor so your body forms a straight line from shoulders to knees.
4. Squeeze your belly button toward your spine.
5. Hold for 3 seconds at the top & slowly lower your body back to the floor.
6. Repeat 4-15 times (repetitions).

#3 Important Change

GET UP & MOVE MORE

Find an activity that you enjoy to keep you moving.

Moderate Aerobic Activities plus great Core Strengthen Activities:

Pilates	Walking Stairs
Tai Chi	Swimming
Yoga	Gardening
Pickle Ball	Skiing
Badminton	Cycling
Tennis	Hiking
Golf/Walking	Yard Work...
Dancing	to name a few.

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Physical activity or exercise, is important to staying strong and maintaining balance. Research has found that exercise programs reduce falls that cause injuries, reduce serious injuries, and broken bones. (Br J Sports Med. 2015)

OTHER EXERCISE BENEFITS

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- Improves posture.
- Decreases risk of falls.
- Lowers the risk of most cancers.
- Reduces the risk of developing all forms of dementia.
- Reduces the risk of most chronic diseases, like heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or stroke.

HOW TO BEGIN

To promote good health and prevent chronic disease, the US Dept of Health & Human Services (HHS) issued these Physical Activity Guidelines for Adults:

1. Moderate aerobic activity - 150 to 300 minutes each week for cardiovascular health. That means getting your heart rate up to 64 to 76% higher than your resting heart rate.
2. Or vigorous aerobic activity - 75 minutes each week. That means getting your heart rate up to 77 to 93% higher than your resting heart rate.
3. Exercise times can be done in three 10-minute bouts of activity. 10-minutes is the minimum amount of time to get cardiovascular benefits.
4. Add strength training exercises (like core) at least 2 days a week.
5. If you haven't been active, walking is a great way to begin. It is advisable to invest in a good pair of walking shoes to help keep you stable.

**Expert
Tip**

Don't think of exercise as a luxury, think of it as a health insurance policy to prevent the most common chronic diseases.

WALKING



Note: Using a set of Urban Walking Poles can make your walking program more productive. The Urban Poles, with their specially designed ergonomic handles, help with stability, improve core strength, and allow for a more neutral posture position. Our members love them!

Disclosure: Agile 4 Life Fitness does not receive any commission for sales of the poles or other products sold by Urban Poling. We recommend this product strictly on the basis of quality for the price and the positive results our members have achieved using these poles.

1. Before starting a regular walking program, make sure your shoes are not showing uneven wear. Old worn out shoes can cause too much stress on ankles, hips, knees or back.
2. A good pair of snug fitting socks can give additional comfort and prevent blisters.
3. Wear comfortable clothing in layers to moderate body temperature.
4. Warm-up before walking, or walk at a slower pace for the first 2-4 minutes as a warm-up.
5. Pull tall in the torso while walking, with shoulders blades down and head & neck in a neutral position, centered over shoulders.

REAL PEOPLE, REAL PROBLEMS, AMAZING RESULTS

"Over the last two-three years I had taken 3-4 bad falls where my feet got twisted and I fell straight onto my back/side without the opportunity to break my fall. It was scary for me to think that it could happen again. Now after working on my balance, I feel a lot more confident when I walk. My internal mantra is, stand tall, tighten my core - to walk confidently down the street."

Diane R., Berkeley, CA
Age 65

"When the gym closed due to Covid, I started doing a weekly Zoom session with Joy. Joy is just a stellar coach! I greatly improved my balance, strength & flexibility. I'm able to prevent falls, and my upper body strength is much better now."

Ann-Marie H., Berkeley, CA
Age 73

"...after 2 and a half years; I have experienced increased self confidence and self-awareness, greatly improved balance, strength, endurance, & flexibility. The added benefit is my left knee inflammation has diminished, and although in my 70s I feel more fit than ever!"

Janice S., Berkeley, CA Age 74

"Working the correct muscles with proper form has allowed me to continue doing activities I love: skiing both downhill and cross country, hiking, gardening, and even, through last year, backpacking."

Sheila T., Berkeley, CA
Age 84

Hi, I'm Joy Fletcher the owner of Agile 4 Life Fitness. I hope you found ***The 3 Most Important Changes You Should Start Today to Prevent Falls...As You Age*** helpful.

At Agile 4 Life Fitness I specialize in offering quality on-line fitness classes and personal trainings for older adults.

For over 30 years, I've helped hundreds of women & men get stronger so they could improve their health & fitness. My background includes medical-based cardiac rehabs & weight management, corporate fitness, & years as a health & fitness educator. I'm now focused on the science of fitness & how it changes with age. As part of the baby boomer generation, I understand what it takes to stay strong & independent. My mission is to help adults 50 years & older with age-appropriate fitness training with expert instruction. I'm a

WITS certified personal trainer, a Senior Fitness Consultant, a Corrective Exercise Specialist in the Bio-Mechanics Method, with a Bachelors of Science in Food & Nutrition.

If you'd like to learn more about reducing your fall risk, checkout my new fall prevention program called **Standing Strong**.

Standing Strong is a 12-week on-line group program designed to help older adults, just like you, significantly improve your balance & strength to prevent a life-altering fall.

Don't you want to STOP putting your life on hold in hopes of preventing a fall & start living again with a renewed sense of confidence?

Contact me TODAY – so we can make that happen.

info@Agile4LifeFitness.com