



KEEPING **WELL** for older adults



This booklet was created to help older Albertans to stay well, keep active and stay connected to lower their risk of falling, particularly as we come out of the long periods of quarantine and social distancing due to the pandemic.

A fall can have a significant impact on the lifestyle and independence of an older adult. Falls are the leading cause of injury among seniors in Alberta and 20-30% of seniors will fall at least once per year.

Finding Balance is an education program and public awareness campaign designed to educate and empower older Albertans to stay independent and prevent falls. The falls prevention program and campaign is developed and led by the Injury Prevention Centre, School of Public Health, University of Alberta in partnership with seniors groups, health care organizations, and practitioners from across Alberta.

Finding Balance resources can be shared with older adults, family members, caregivers, practitioners, and colleagues. These free resources can be ordered and/or downloaded from the *Finding Balance* website <https://findingbalancealberta.ca>

Please call 780-492-6019 to order or for more information.

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Contents

Mind Your Mental Health	3
Be Active	4
Moving Well At Home	5
Building Strength and Challenging Your Balance.....	6
Warm Up Movements	7
Seated Movements	8
Strength and Balance Exercises.....	9
Main Exercises - Standing	11
Cool Down.....	12
Vision	13
Medication and Alcohol	14
Eating Well As You Age.....	15
Keeping Safe In Your Home	16
How to Get Up	17
Finding Balance & Alberta's Elders	18
Fire Safety	19
Footwear & Foot Care Tips for Older Adults	20
Winter in Alberta Tips	21
Stay Independent! Word Search.....	22
Protect Yourself from Fraud and Scams.....	23
Tips for Keeping Well At Home Daily Checklist	25
Falls Prevention Crossword.....	26
Helpful Contacts for Older Adults in Alberta	27
Helpful Websites.....	28
Puzzle Answer Keys	30
Falls Prevention Calendar	31

Mind Your Mental Health

“Mental health is key to your well-being. It is how you feel, think, act, and interact with the world around you. It’s about living well and feeling capable despite any challenges.” - CMHA Alberta Division

Tips for mental well-being from the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Alberta Division:

- **Build healthy self-esteem** - recognize your unique abilities to follow your goals and interests without comparing yourself to others.
 - **Build positive support networks** - utilize emotional support, practical help, and alternate points of view. Support can come from family and friends, neighbours, co-workers, faith communities, clubs or support groups for specific problems.
 - **Get involved** - connect with others in your community who share similar interests or values, learn new skills, build confidence, and see your experiences in a different way. This gives you a great feeling of purpose and satisfaction.
 - **Build resiliency** - look at the situation realistically, take action when you can make changes, let go of things you can’t change, and recognize the helpful support in your life. Resiliency helps you cope well with problems, stress, and other difficult situations which often are a normal part of life.
 - **Recognize your emotions** - express your emotions respectfully, discover how your emotions affect the way you think or act, take action when your emotional response isn’t helpful, and learn to accept all of your emotions.
- Please use these telephone resources from the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Alberta Division if you need help right away:
- **Alberta Mental Health Help Line:**
1 (877) 303-2642
 - **Alberta Addictions Helpline:**
1 (866) 332-2322
 - **Distress Line (Edmonton and area):**
(780) 482-4357
 - **Distress Centre (Calgary and area):**
(403) 266-4357
 - **Distress Line of South Western Alberta:**
(403) 327-7905
 - **First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line:** 1 (855) 242-3310
 - **Rural Distress Line:** 1 (800) 232-7288
 - **211** can help you find the right community and social services. Dial 2-1-1 to speak to an Information & Referral Specialist.
 - **If suicide is a possibility, call 911**

If you start to feel overwhelmed, this simple breathing exercise can help:

1. Sit or lie down in a way that’s comfortable for you.
2. Take a deep breath in and hold it, at the same time raising and tightening your shoulders, and clenching your fists.
3. Count slowly to five as you breathe out. Relax your shoulders and release your fists.
4. Do this several times.

Be Active

Many people notice that they are not as mobile as they age and that their joints and muscles feel a little stiff. The movements included on the next few pages of this booklet will build your strength, balance, and flexibility. This helps you to do your daily activities such as grocery shopping, attending exercise classes, meeting friends and family, or volunteering and other things you enjoy.

As indoor activities such as cooking, eating, getting dressed, reading, and watching television may take up much of your day, finding ways of being active at home can make you feel better. This will also help your body be better protected for fighting infection and illness. Going for a daily walk is a great way to enjoy the outdoors and get some fresh air. If you are not able to go outside, standing by an open window or on a doorstep to get some fresh air can feel good, too.

Being active every day helps to:

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

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



Moving Well At Home

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

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

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



Quick safety check before exercising

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

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

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

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

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

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

Building Strength and Challenging Your Balance

When you...

Challenge
Your
Balance

Build
Strength

Be
Active

...you can enjoy benefits like:

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

Living Independently



Gardening or Yardwork



Pickleball



Curling



Biking



Playing with Grandchildren



Dance



Aquatics



Focus on your ABCs

- Alignment
- Breathing
- Control

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

- Breathe throughout all exercises.

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

Warm Up Movements

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

Seated March -

Warms muscles and prepares for movement.

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



Foot Alphabet -

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

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



Shoulder Roll -

Warms muscles and prepares for movement.

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



Side to Side Rotation -

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

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



Seated Movements

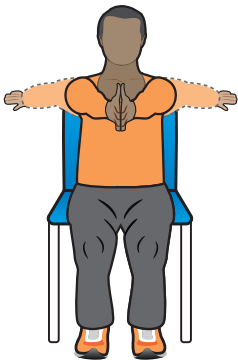
Make sure that you are near a sturdy and stable counter, and that any chairs used will not move. Wear comfortable clothes and supportive footwear.



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

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

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



Arm Swings - Helps with stamina and endurance.

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

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



Front Knee Strengtheners -

Strengthens the knee for walking and bending.

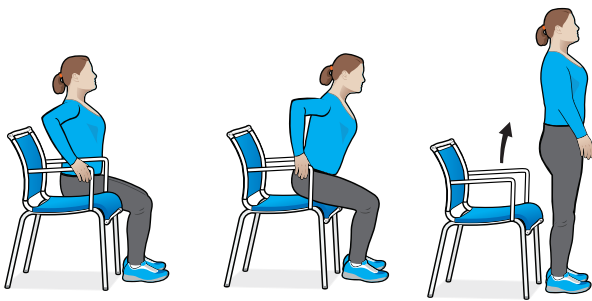
- Sit back in the chair, back supported and feet under knees
- Brush one foot forward along the floor then lift the ankle slowly and straighten (do not lock) the knee
- Lower the foot with control

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

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

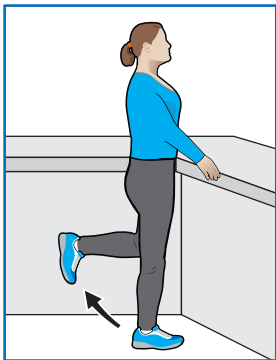
Strength and Balance Exercises

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



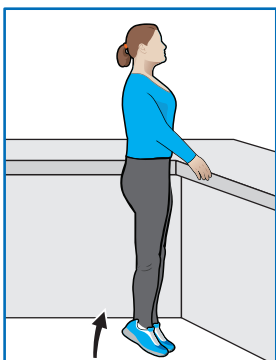
Sit to Stand -

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



Standing Leg Curl -

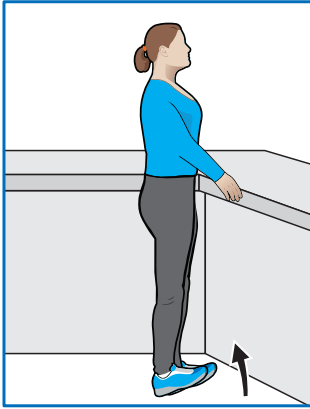
- Stand with feet hip-width apart, hold a counter for support
- Shift your weight onto one leg
- Bring the heel of your bent leg towards your buttocks as far as you are comfortable
- Lower your foot back down to starting position
- Repeat on each leg up to 15 times



Heel Raise -

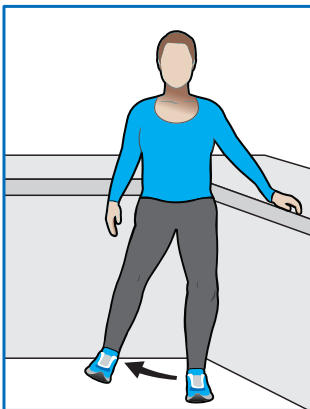
- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Hold on to counter and look forward
- Slowly raise both heels off the floor, standing on toes
- Hold for 5-10 seconds
- Return to start position
- Repeat up to 15 times

Strength and Balance Exercises



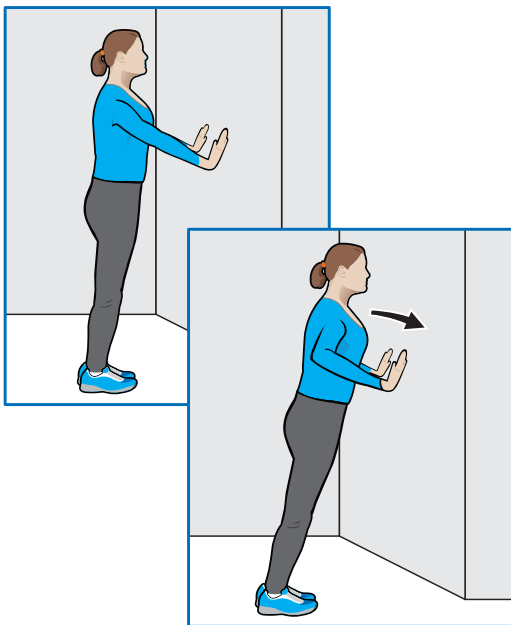
Toe Raise -

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



Side Leg Lift -

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

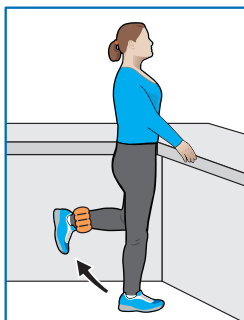


Wall Push Up -

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

Main Exercises – Standing

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



Standing Single Leg Curl With Weight -

Helps improve walking stability.

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

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

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



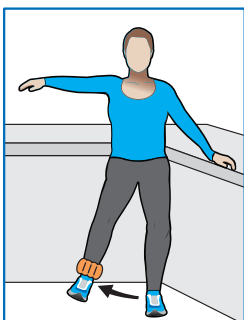
Wall Push Up With Countertop -

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

chest moves forward towards counter

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

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



Side Leg Lift With Weight Lateral Arm Raise -

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

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



Marching On The Spot -

Helps maintain bone density at the hip and spine.

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

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

Cool Down

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

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

Important to:

- Move slower
- Lower heart rate
 - Breathe



Vision

Ensuring your vision is clear is a must in preventing falls.

As we age, there are many changes that affect our vision:

- The amount of light entering our eyes decreases, our pupil size becomes smaller, and the cornea becomes more opaque which means our eyes need more time to adjust to changes in light.
- We lose depth perception as we get older which makes it harder to judge the height and depth of stairs and curbs.
- We become more sensitive to glare, so use your sunglasses year-round, even in winter!

Some medications can cause blurred or double vision which increases your risk of falling. Speak to your physician if you experience a change in your vision.

Ensuring your eyeglass prescription is correct is a good first step in fall prevention, but your eye health is equally important. During your annual eye exam, your optometrist examines the tissues and structures inside the eye, looking for eye diseases such as:

- cataracts
- glaucoma
- macular degeneration
- a tear in the retina
- bleeding
- tumours
- early signs of serious medical conditions, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Many eye diseases have no early signs or symptoms.



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

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

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

Medication and Alcohol

Medication

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

- Be aware that medications that relax you, help you sleep, or improve your mood can increase your risk of falling.
- Always follow the instructions and doses when taking medications.
- Use only one pharmacy to fill your prescriptions.
- Keep a current medication list in your wallet and at home.
- Do not share prescription medications.
- Return expired medication to your pharmacist.
- Ask your pharmacist about pill packs.

Questions to ask your pharmacist about your medications:

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

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about all of your medications, vitamins, and supplements to lower your risk of a fall.

Alcohol

As you age, our bodies and life circumstances change which makes drinking alcohol riskier in the following ways:

- Your body processes alcohol more slowly and your blood alcohol rises higher.
- Loss of strength, balance, and coordination can increase risk of falls.
- Loneliness and isolation can lead to drinking alcohol to cope.
- Alcohol can negatively affect memory and cognitive abilities.
- Some medications interact badly with alcohol.

The Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health: Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines for Older Adults recommends the following for adults over 65 years old:

- **FOR WOMEN**, no more than 1 standard alcoholic drink per day, with no more than 5 alcoholic drinks per week in total.
- **FOR MEN**, no more than 1–2 standard alcoholic drinks per day, with no more than 7 alcoholic drinks per week in total.

Your age, body weight, and other health conditions will impact how you respond to alcohol. Consider drinking less alcohol than suggested or even not drinking at all, especially if you have a health condition.

If you're worried about your drinking, speak to your healthcare provider or another qualified professional.

Eating Well As You Age

A healthy diet is an important part of active, healthy aging.

Healthy eating can help:

- maintain an appropriate weight
- promote and protect health and well-being
- provide essential energy and nutrients
- prevent, lower the risk, or slow progression of chronic diseases
- prevent muscle and bone loss to reduce the risk of falling or breaking bones.

**What you eat matters.
Choose foods that have
little to no sodium,
sugars, or saturated fats.**

Ensure you are eating a well balanced diet. The “Healthy Plate” from the Canada Food Guide suggests that you:

1. eat plenty of fruits and vegetables
 2. eat protein food like meat, fish, pulses, eggs, nuts, seeds, dairy, or tofu with each meal to keep your muscles and bones healthy
 3. make water your drink of choice
 4. choose whole grain foods.
- Eat foods high in fibre to help prevent and treat a variety of conditions such as high cholesterol, diabetes, bowel management, and heart disease.
 - Drink plenty of fluids, about 6-8 cups of fluid per day, throughout the day to stay hydrated. Examples include water and milk. This reduces infections and improves

concentration, energy, and mood, so you can keep your mind active.

- Planning and preparing meals is also a good way to keep up your daily routine. For many people, it can be an enjoyable part of the day.
- Add variety into your diet to help you get all the nutrients you need and maintain a healthy weight.
- Keep a supply of non-perishables at home in case you can’t get to the store, like peanut butter, canned fruit, canned sodium free vegetables, frozen fruits/vegetables, canned fish, and canned beans/lentils.

Speak to your healthcare provider or a Registered Dietitian if you have concerns about your diet and for healthy eating tips.

“A senior’s social network is important to your health and well-being. It helps you to stay active and eat better.”

<https://www.cihi.ca/en/canadian-seniors-and-mental-health>



Keeping Safe in Your Home

As you age, falls can occur in your home because of hazards that are easily overlooked but important to fix. It's important to ensure your home is safe, especially if you are doing more exercise and activities.

Create a trip-free home

- Keep floors and pathways clear of furniture, cords, and clutter.
- Remove scatter or throw rugs and mats.
- Use non-slip mats on slippery surfaces (e.g. bathroom floors, entrance ways).
- Keep a cordless phone or cellular phone nearby, so you don't have to rush to answer a call.

Bathroom safety

- Install safety grab bars by your shower, tub and toilet.
- Use non-slip mats inside and outside the bathtub and shower.
- Keep floors dry.
- Keep a nightlight on in the bathroom.

Light your way

- Give your eyes time to adjust to changes in light.
- Keep all areas well-lit.
- Use nightlights and motion sensors in halls and bathrooms.



Steady on the stairs

- Use handrails when walking up and down stairs.
- Keep stairs well lit and install light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Keep stairs free of clutter.



How To Get Up

If you have a fall:

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

- If you are injured, call for help.

Even if you are unhurt, tell a healthcare professional, family member or health care practitioner that you have fallen to lower your risk of falling again.

1

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



2

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



3

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



4

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



5

Lean forwards and push up using your arms and front leg, slowly rising to a standing position.



6

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



Finding Balance & Alberta's Elders

The Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council (KTC) has adapted the original *Finding Balance* resources to produce culturally-appropriate tools to support caregivers, professionals, and individuals in First Nations communities throughout Alberta. By including input from Elders, the resources and guides highlight the strength, independence, and unique needs of each area.

GET A GRIP ON SLIPPERY SURFACES



GETTING AROUND IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Every year, $\frac{1}{3}$ of Alberta Elders will fall...

The good news is that there are actions you can take to prevent falls.

Being aware of hazards in the community can help you to avoid falling when on the go.



Take action to be safe in your community.

- Take your time to avoid rushing.
- Watch for uneven surfaces, cracks, or obstacles.
- Use your walking or mobility aids.
- Sit down and rest when you feel tired.
- Keep your hands free for balance and to use hand rails.
- Watch out for slippery surfaces.

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



**KEE TAS KEE NOW
TRIBAL COUNCIL**



KEEP YOUR MOCCASINS MOVING!

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

For more information, visit FindingBalanceAlberta.ca

Fire Safety



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

If the alarm sounds...

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

Maintain your smoke alarms.

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

Make sure everyone can hear the alarm.

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

Have a home fire escape plan prepared.

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

Plan your escape around your abilities.

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

If you cannot escape...

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

Keep fire out of your kitchen.

Never leave cooking food unattended.

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

Keep the kitchen clear of combustibles

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

towels, pot holders or food packaging.

Prevent burns and injuries.

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

Footwear & Foot Care Tips for Older Adults

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

Proper Foot Care

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

Proper Footwear

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



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



Winter in Alberta Tips

Tips to walk safely in winter:

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

Sunlight and snow can be challenging during winter months:

- The sun can shine directly into your eyes and reflect off the snow making the light too bright and harsh.
- Snow may make things appear to vibrate, or not be as clear or sharp.
- In bright or low light, it can be hard to see if sidewalks and driveways may be icy, slippery or a sloped surface. Loose snow can also hide the condition of the surface.
- Dim light in the evenings and night can make it harder to see all of your surroundings.
- Snow can also affect hearing because it might muffle sounds like approaching vehicles.
- Be sure to wear sunglasses all year.



Walk Like a Penguin

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



Stay Independent!

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

Word List:

active

balance

clutter

doctor

enjoy

handrails

hazards

hydrate

independent

medication

movement

optometrist

pharmacist

rest

strength

vision

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



Protect Yourself from Fraud and Scams

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

Criminals who commit fraud and scams target people who have a lot of money, or may try to steal a small amount of money from many people. Scammers may call or email you directly or come to your door. Common scams include pension scams, free items or vouchers,

Your bank, the government and protective services (police) will NEVER ask you to transfer money or move it to a safe account through email or on the phone. Your bank or credit union will not send you anything by email unless you have set that up with them.

People who phone saying they are from your 'credit card company' or are from 'Canada Revenue Agency' are two of the most common scams. If you get a phone call like this, hang up immediately. Do not give them any information.

tax rebates, tax refunds, fake competitions, investment scams, door to door scams, and free money from the government.

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

- Report it right away! Call your bank if your wallet is lost or stolen, or the mail that you are expecting goes missing.
- Never share your Personal Identification Number (PIN) with another person.
- Memorize your PIN.
- Cover the number pad with your hand when entering your PIN at bank machines and when making store purchases.
- Keep your credit or debit card in sight when you are paying at a restaurant or store.
- Safely dispose of old bills and statements—shredding is best.
- Keep all personal documents (birth certificate, passport or Social Insurance Number (SIN) card) in a secure place and do not carry those documents with you for your daily activities.
- Never give out your credit card, bank account, or personal information to someone over the phone, at the door, or in an email unless you can confirm the person or organization you are dealing with or you made the contact with them first.

(Protect yourself from scammers - continued on next page)

Protect Yourself from Fraud and Scams

Protect Yourself from Fraud and Scams
(continued)

Online or email scams are also quite common. Sometimes the emails look like they are coming from a person or organization you know.

Protect yourself from online or email scams:
If an email looks suspicious:

- Do not respond to that email.
- Call to check the organization or person, if possible.
- DO NOT GO to website links listed in that email.
- DO NOT CLICK on pop-up windows. You can safely close the window.
- DO NOT OPEN attachments.

Phone and door-to-door scams are also very common. Someone will call or come to your door pretending to be from a charity, from your credit card company, or even a distant relative. You might be offered a free prize or trip. The caller or visitor may ask you to confirm personal information, to send them money or a cheque, or to return money they “accidentally” sent you.

Protect yourself from phone and door-to-door scams: If you are not completely sure who you are dealing with on your phone or at your door, do not give them any money or information.

Other Tips to Protect Yourself from Fraud and Scams:

- Do not sign an agreement or contract to buy anything without giving yourself time to think it over. If someone insists that an “offer” is “time limited” and you must decide at that moment, it is probably better not to buy.
- Before hiring someone or agreeing to have work done on your home, ask for proof of identity and check their references.

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

For more information, visit
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/campaigns/seniors.html>
or visit your local Service Canada office.

Tips for Keeping Well At Home Daily Checklist

Every day, set goals, routine and structure to help provide you with purpose and a sense of achievement.

Keeping in touch

- ☐ Talk to family and friends.
- ☐ Talk to others about how you feel or help you may need. Everyone needs advice and reassurance and others likely feel similar to you.
- ☐ You may want to chat with a friend or you could consider volunteering.

Moving more

- ☐ Try to move more throughout your day.
- ☐ If possible, get out in the fresh air for a walk, or in the yard.
- ☐ Add seated and standing activities into your daily routine around your home.
- ☐ Break up long periods of inactivity with chunks of movement.

Eating and drinking

- ☐ Drink plenty of liquids including water and milk.
- ☐ Stick to regular meal times but if your appetite is poor have healthy snacks in addition to your meals.
- ☐ Eat a balanced diet of high protein (meat, eggs and nuts) foods, whole grains (bread, cereals, pasta or brown rice) and plenty of fruit and vegetables .
- ☐ Eat two portions of fish a week, one of which should be oily.

Keeping busy

- ☐ Plan your day and try to get up and go to bed at a similar time each day.
- ☐ Do activities you enjoy, such as watch a movie, read a book, or do some puzzles.
- ☐ Try to do new things each day or start that project you've been meaning to begin.

Feeling joy

- ☐ Appreciate the nature around you.
- ☐ Listen to some music.
- ☐ Try something different, or something you have done in the past that you have time to do again. Talk about it with friends.



Falls Prevention Crossword

Across

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

Down

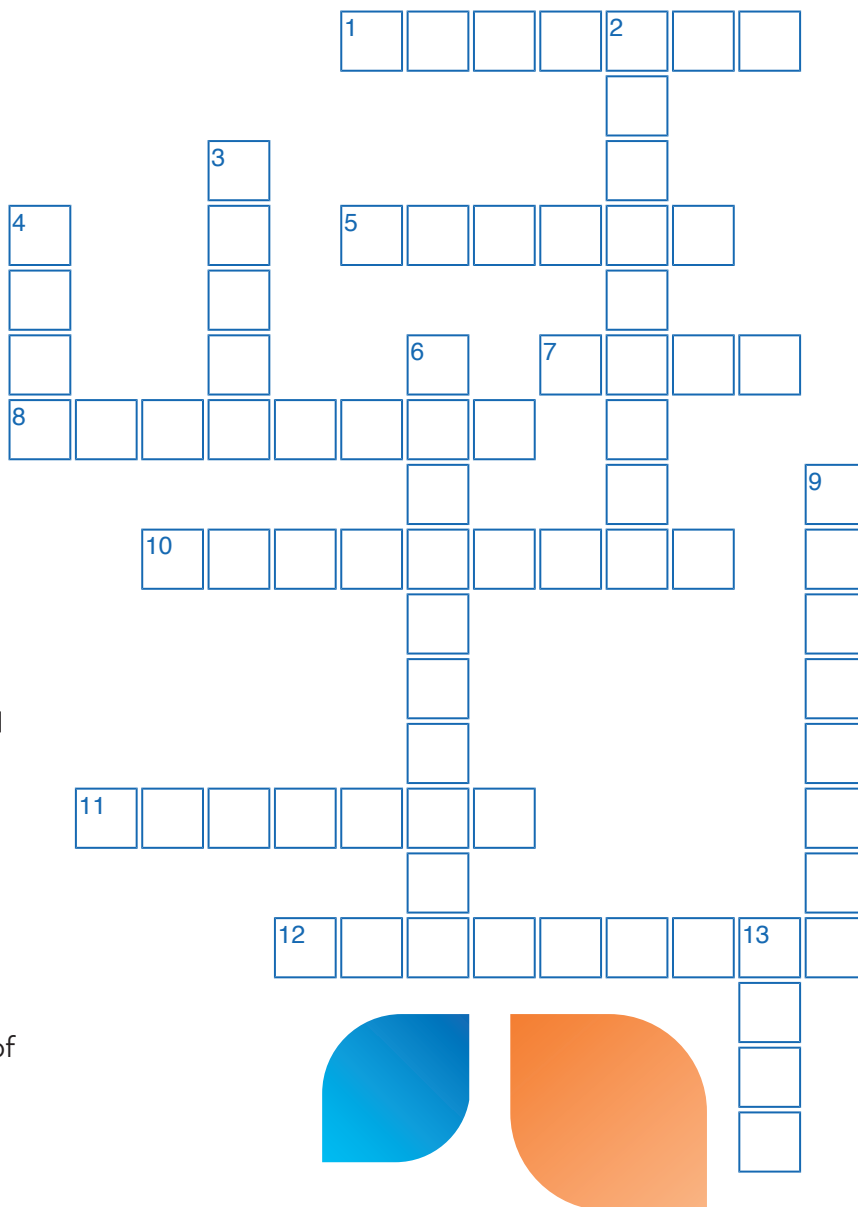
2. Remove these types of floor coverings that can cause you to trip (2 words).
3. One of the benefits of physical activity is that it keeps your _____ and lungs healthy.
4. You should have your _____ checked every year and clean your glasses daily.

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

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

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

The answer key is on page 30.



Helpful Contacts for Older Adults in Alberta

211 Alberta Call - text or live chat help for community Information, resources and supports

Addiction Helpline - 1-866-332-2322

Alberta Supports Contact Centre - Toll-free at 1-877-644-9992 Deaf or hearing impaired with TDD/TTY units, call 1-800-232-7215

Crisis Text Line - Text CONNECT to 741741

Elder & Family Abuse - For 24 hour support and referral, call Family Violence Info Line 310-1818

Dementia Advice - Advice and support for people with dementia or the people who care for them. Call 811

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

Fire Prevention - Contact your local fire department

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

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

- North 1-855-371-4122
- Edmonton 780-496-1300
- Central 1-855-371-4122

- Calgary 403-943-1920 (or) 1-888-943-1920 South
- Bow Island 403-545-2296
- Brooks 403-501-3244
- Lethbridge and Area 403-388-6380 or 1-866-388-6380
- Medicine Hat 403-581-5750
- Oyen 403-664-3651

Income Support Contact Centre - Financial help for Albertans who don't have resources to meet their basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, shelter). 1-866-644-5135

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

Mental Health Helpline - 1-877-303-2642

MyHealth.Alberta.ca - Healthlink call 811

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

Rehab Line - The Rehabilitation Advice Line 1-833-379-0563 is a telephone service that provides free rehabilitation advice and general health information for Albertans over 18 years of age.

Seniors' Centre Without Walls Program Guide 2021 - How to register: Please call the Edmonton Southside Primary Care Network at 780-395-2626 to register.

Helpful Websites

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

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

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

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

Alberta Blue Cross - www.ab.bluecross.ca

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

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

Are you at Risk of a Fall? -
https://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019_FB_Fall-Assess-Tool-FINAL.pdf

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

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

Canada's Low Risk Alcohol Guidelines -
<https://www.ccsa.ca/canadas-low-risk-alcohol-drinking-guidelines-brochure>

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

Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health: Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines for Older Adults -
<https://ccsmh.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/CCSA-Alcohol-and-Older-Adults-Poster-2020-en.pdf>

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

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) National - www.cmha.ca

Canadian Mental Health Association 211 Resource Lists -
<https://edmonton.cmha.ca/211-resource-lists/>

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

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

Dental and Optical Assistance for Seniors -
Eligible seniors can get help covering the cost of basic dental and optical services.
<https://www.alberta.ca/dental-optical-assistance-seniors.aspx>

Everyday Exercises for Older Adults Poster -
https://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/FB_Exercise_Poster_2021_Adapted.pdf

Exercise for Strength & Balance Poster Cards -
<http://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/FB-Exercise-Cards-2017.pdf>

Finding Balance - Stay Independent. Prevent Falls - <https://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/FB-Brochure-April2019-DIGITAL.pdf>

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

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

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

Continued on next page

Helpful Websites

Continued from previous page

Help Right Now - Canadian Mental Health Association Alberta Division -

<https://alberta.cmha.ca/getting-help/help-right-now/>

How to Get Up from the Floor -

Available in 15 different languages

<http://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/FB-How-to-Get-Up-2017-English.pdf>

In Your Home Information Sheet -

<http://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/FB-At-Home-Handout-2017.pdf>

Indigenous Wellness Core -

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

Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council -

<http://ktcadmin.ca>

Low Risk Drinking Guidelines -

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Pages/HealthInfoToolsDefault.aspx>

Mobile Tools to Promote Mental Wellness (AHS) -

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-covid-19-mobile-tools-mental-wellness.pdf>

Parachute Canada -

Videos and caregiver information:

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

Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults -

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

Poison and Drug Information Service (PADIS) -

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

Public Health Agency of Canada -

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

Seniors Health - Alberta Health Services:

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

Seniors Home Adaptation and Repair Program (SHARP) -

Low-interest home equity loans can cover a range of home adaptations and renovations to help seniors stay in their homes longer.

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

Seniors Wellness in Challenging Times (AHS) -

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

Summary: Guidelines for Comprehensive Mental Health Services for Older Adults in Canada -

<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/media/4317>

University of Alberta Guide to Mobility and Independence -

Medically At-Risk Driver Centre (ualberta.ca)

Edmonton & Area Guide -

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

Calgary & Area Guide -

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

Virtual Mental Health Supports -

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

Walk Like a Penguin - Winter Walking -

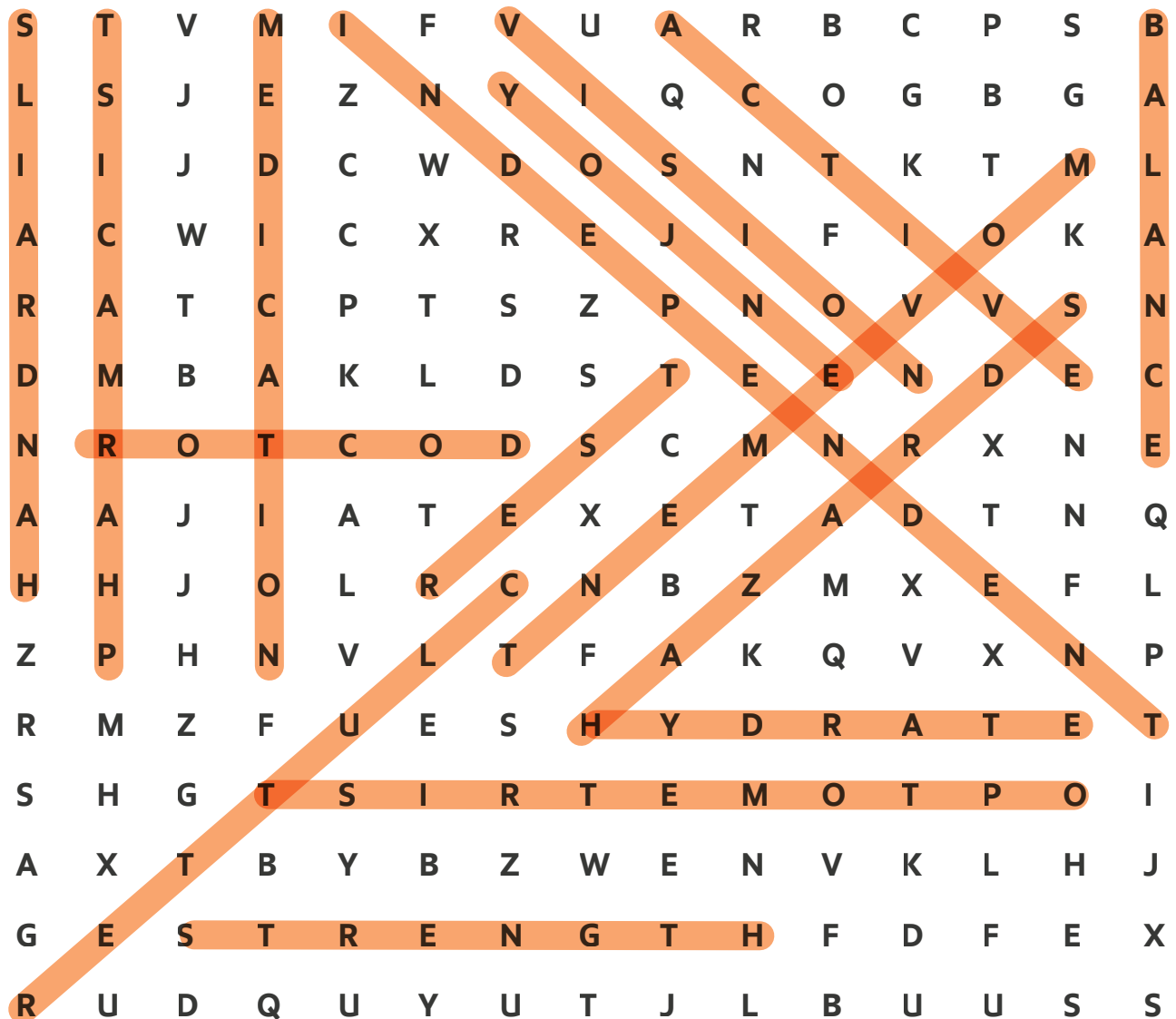
www.penguinwalk.ca

Warm-Up Poster -

<https://findingbalancealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/Warm-Up-Poster.pdf>

Puzzle Answer Keys

Stay Independent! - Word Search on Page 22



Falls Prevention Crossword Puzzle on Page 26

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

Live Well. Be Active to Prevent a Fall.

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



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Comments and Feedback:

Email: info@findingbalancealberta.ca • Phone: 780-492-6019

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The authors and advisers of the exercises in this program accept no liability. All content is provided for general information only, and should not be treated as a substitute for the medical advice of your own health care provider or any other health care professional. Health care professionals using these exercises do so at their own risk. The authors do not know you, your medical conditions or physical fitness and cannot give advice tailored to you, your medical condition or physical function. The authors cannot guarantee the safety or effectiveness of this program of exercises for you. Any noticeable changes in health, pain, mobility or falls should prompt a visit to your health care provider. Always consult your health care provider before starting a new program.

Learn more at the *Finding Balance* website, www.findingbalancealberta.ca