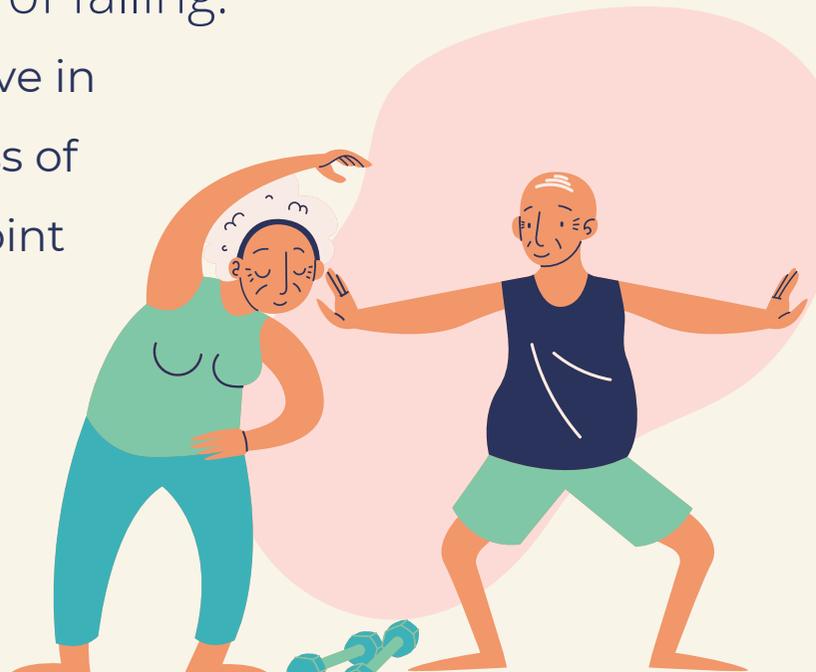


# *Exercise is the Best* **Medicine**

## Why should I exercise?

- Falling is common and has major consequences, so you should take every precaution you can to reduce fall risk!
- Exercises that improve balance and make your legs stronger, lower your chances of falling.
  - A gentle exercise can be very effective in preventing or slowing down the loss of bone density, relieving bone and joint pain, and is safe for people with osteoporosis.



# How can I be safe while exercising?

- Wear proper footwear: shoes that protect your feet, fit properly and are secure
- Make sure your space is free of trip hazards: loose objects, uneven surfaces, rugs that are not secured with double-sided tape, etc.
- Don't overdo it!
- Don't stretch to the point where you feel pain during yoga or stretching exercises
- When strength training, don't increase reps, length, and weight at the same time. Increase one at a time to avoid injury

# How often should I exercise?

- If you are new to exercising, start slow and slowly increase the frequency with time
- Older adults benefit from completing 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise a week or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic exercise a week or a combination of both
- This can be increased to roughly 300 min of moderate and 150 min of vigorous aerobic exercise overtime for greater health benefits
- Physical activity should be completed in at least 10-minute intervals
- Older adults with poor mobility should perform physical activity to enhance balance and prevent falls on 3 or more days per week
- Remember that some physical activity is better than none at all
- Strengthening exercises should be completed around 2 times a week

# Possible Exercises

- Find an activity you enjoy!
- Walking
- Riding a bicycle
- Golfing
- Yoga
- Stretching
- Water Aerobics
- SilverSneakers
- Lifting weights (as tolerated)
- Working with resistance bands
- Bodyweight exercises (squats, lunges, etc.)
- Gardening

# 7 Yoga Poses for Seniors



## Mountain Pose

This yoga pose helps with balance and grounding through the feet. Stand tall with your big toes touching and heels together. Draw your abdominals in and up and relax your shoulders down and back. Breathe five to eight breaths.

## Tree Pose

Excellent for leg and abdominal strength. Good for seniors for balance and concentration. Stand tall and place one foot on the opposite inner thigh, either above or below the knee. Open the leg to the side, bring your hands to a prayer position and hold for five to eight breaths.



## Bird Dog

Good for abdominals and back support. The health of the spine is extremely important as we age. Start by kneeling and stretching one arm forward and the opposite leg back. Imagine you have a tea cup on your back and draw your belly button towards your spine. Stay for a breath and then switch sides. Repeat five times



## Downward Facing Dog

This position is great for joint health, flexibility and all-over body strength. Start on your hands and knees, tuck your toes under and lift your hips up and back until your body forms a triangle. Use your core strength and legs to bring the weight back as much as possible. Stay for five to eight breaths, lower yourself down, and repeat two more times. For seniors with wrist issues, try the Forearm Downward Dog instead, putting your forearms flat on the mat.

## Sphinx

Excellent for upper back strength and preventing forward head syndrome. Sphinx is gentle and really does a great job of opening up the chest and working the rear deltoids. Lie down on your stomach and place your forearms on the mat, elbows under your shoulders. Press firmly into your arms and draw your shoulder blades together and down your back. Lift your abdominals in and up and stay for five to eight breaths.



## Cobbler's Pose

This is a great way for seniors to keep their hips open and massage their feet. Sit tall and bring the soles of the feet together as you open your knees out to the sides. Fold yourself forward for a deeper stretch but try to prevent rounding too much in the lower back.

Hold for five to eight breaths.

## Savasana

Savasana resets the nervous system and helps with restoring peace to the body and mind. Lie on your back in final relaxation. It's good for seniors to get comfortable with letting go more often throughout the day. Lie down and let the floor support you. Completely relax the muscles and breathe as you lie there and take a deep, restorative break.

