

Best Home Exercises to Reduce Your Falls Risk

NeuRA exercise specialist Assoc. Professor Kim Delbaere has put together a short list of exercises that could help you to maintain good balance and reduce your risk of falling. 'We face a risk of deconditioning if we don't do these kinds of movements regularly. These exercises strengthen our muscles, joints and ligaments and lessen the likelihood of a fall later' she said.

These simple movements are easy to do at home and help to prevent the loss of strength and stability. They have a significant benefit for people over the age of 65 years for whom practicing for just two hours per week can significantly reduce the risk of falling.

Adapted from www.neura.edu.au/researcher-news/best-home-exercises-to-reduce-your-falls-risk/. See www.neura.edu.au for insights into their remarkable brain and nervous system research.

Knee raises - *Helps with: climbing stairs, getting in and out of cars, stepping off buses*

- Hold on to a bench or chair to maintain your balance
- Lift one knee to hip level, so that your leg is bent at a 90-degree angle
- Hold it there for 5 seconds before you swap to your other knee
- Repeat 8 times, with each knee

Side leg raises - *Helps with: side-stepping and reduces your likelihood of tripping*

- Hold on to a bench or chair to maintain your balance
- Put your weight on one leg and lift the other leg to the side, like a pendulum
- Hold it there for 5 seconds before you swap to the other leg
- Repeat 8 times, on each leg

Heel raises - *Helps with: walking and climbing stairs*

- Hold on to a bench top or something high up and solid
- Lift both of your heels off the floor so that your weight is in the balls of your feet or toes
- Hold this for 3 seconds before placing your heels back on the floor
- Repeat 5 times

Stepping up - *Helps with: stability, especially on uneven surfaces*

- Find a staircase with a railing you can hold on to
- Focusing on the first stair only, plant your foot on the step and move up on to it
- Then step back down
- Repeat 5 times, stepping up and back down at your own pace

Sit to stand - *Helps with: getting up and down from a chair or toilet*

- Find a chair and sit in it. Use a table or steady nearby surface to help you push up if needed
- Slowly stand up from the chair, using your arms for balance if needed. To make it more challenging, cross your arms over your chest or hold them out in front of you
- Lower yourself back into the chair, maintaining the same arm position
- Repeat 5 times