



Body awareness: Maintaining balance for fewer injuries

When our bodies are performing at optimal levels, everything works. Moving is not a challenge—we just go. But as we age, we may notice slight adjustments we have to make to move as effortlessly as we once did.

You may not realize this, but if you're older than 30, changes could be happening to you that affect your balance. It happens gradually as your inner ear structures, muscle strength, brain processing speed and body awareness naturally decline.¹

It's not all bad news. By simply being aware of these challenges, which happen to all of us, you can focus on ramping up the activities that can keep your balance on an even keel. See the next page for steps you can take today.



Falls cause
3 million
older adults to
visit ERs annually²



Start off on the right foot

Shoes and socks that fit properly will set you up for success, whether going for a long walk or just making your way through the day. When choosing shoes, consider:³

- A snug fit to provide a solid base
- Good heel support to prevent heel slippage
- Moderate cushioning for comfort
- Low heel height for stability

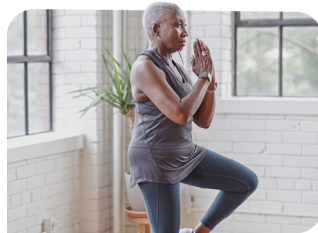
Skip shoes with flexible soles, like slippers or sandals. These can cause unsteadiness.



Health conditions matter

There is a long list of things that could make you dizzy or affect your balance. If you are experiencing these symptoms, talk to your healthcare provider. Chronic conditions and certain medications could be the cause. There are other reasons you may feel off-kilter.^{1,4}

- Vision changes like depth perception and light sensitivity.
- Changes in blood pressure, especially when standing up quickly (postural hypotension).
- Decreased mobility and strength. Muscles and joints play a major role in providing stability and support.



Bolster your balance

These are simple steps you can add to improve your balance:

- Stand on one foot when you're brushing your teeth or chatting with a neighbor. Don't be afraid to use a table, counter or sturdy surface if you need support.
- Stand up from a seated position without using your hands.
- Walk in a line, heel-to-toe, for a short distance.⁴
- Consider practicing yoga or tai chi. They strengthen muscles and challenge your active moving and static balance skills.⁵

**Learn how Livongo can help support you on your wellness journey.
To sign up or learn more, go to Go.Livongo.com/STATEOFIOWA/New.**

Before starting any new exercise routine, talk to your healthcare provider to make sure it's safe.

¹<https://www.aginganddisease.org/EN/10.14336/AD.2024.0124-1>

²<https://www.cdc.gov/falls/about/index.html>

³<https://www.apma.org/patients-and-the-public/tips-for-healthy-feet/balance-boosting-footwear-tips-for-older-people/>

⁴<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/fall-prevention-strategies-to-help-keep-you-from-falling-down>

⁵<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/easy-ways-to-improve-your-balance>

Las comunicaciones del programa Livongo están disponibles en español. Al inscribirse, podrá configurar el idioma que prefiera para las comunicaciones provenientes del medidor y del programa. Para inscribirse en español, llame al 800-945-4355 o visite HOLA.Livongo.com/STATEOFIOWA

The program is offered at no cost to you and your covered spouse/dependents 13+ years old with diabetes and coverage under your Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield plan.

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