

# TAKE THE STRENGTH AND BALANCE CHALLENGE



## BALANCE CHALLENGE

### One Leg Stand

- Find a safe place - close to a chair or wall for support if needed
- Stand tall with your arms by your sides
- Take one foot off the floor and start counting

#### Stop when you:

- Count to 30
- Need to put your foot down
- Need to grab a support
- Need to brace one leg against the other

## STRENGTH CHALLENGE

### Sit to Stand

- Sit tall near the front of the chair
- Place your feet slightly back and hip width apart
- Stand up and sit back down as many times as you can in 30 seconds without using your arms to help

#### Stop when you:

- Reach 30 seconds
- Need to

You can rest as many times as you need



## How did you do?

### Balance Challenge:

Did you manage to keep your balance for 30 seconds?

### Strength Challenge:

How many times did you manage to stand and sit in 30 seconds?

The average number of sit to stands is approximately 17 times for a 60 year old, 15 times for a 70 year old and 11 times for an 80 year old.

As we get older, our balance and muscle strength can slowly decline without us noticing. As a result, we can find it harder to keep our balance if we trip or slip and everyday activities become more challenging.

## How to improve your strength and balance

Six simple exercises – doing the super six exercises overleaf, three or more times a week can help you stay steady and stronger for longer so you can keep doing the things you enjoy.

## Simple steps to stay steady

Falls are not an inevitable part of getting older – there are simple steps you can take to reduce your chance of falling and keep you up and about.

- Stay active
- Manage your medicines
- Regular eye checks
- Look after your feet
- Eat well
- Have a 'get off the floor plan'
- Create a safer home
- Consider taking Vitamin D
- Tell someone if you fall

## Further information

If you are aged 65+ years and have had a fall in the last year and would like further advice about what you can do to reduce your chances of falling in future, contact:

Everyone Health (Cambridgeshire)  
on 0333 005 0093 or  
Healthy Peterborough (Peterborough)  
on 01733 894 540.

Or visit the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) Falls Prevention section at: <http://www.cpft.nhs.uk/falls.htm>





To help you to stay steady, try doing the 'super six' three times a week, in addition to a daily walk.

#### SAFETY CHECK:

- Use a sturdy and stable chair or something solid like a worktop for support.
- Wear supportive shoes and comfortable clothes.
- If any exercise causes pain in your joints or muscles **stop** check you are doing it correctly, and try it again. If pain persists, seek advice from a physiotherapist.
- Feeling your muscles work or a slight muscle soreness the next day is normal.
- If you experience chest pain, severe shortness of breath or dizziness **STOP IMMEDIATELY** and contact your GP or call 111 if your GP practice is closed.
- Try not to hold your breath - breathe normally throughout.

#### Community classes

The super six exercises can be done alongside fun and sociable strength & balance classes. If you are interested and live in:

- **Huntingdonshire** - Contact One Leisure Active lifestyles on **01480 388111**
- Anywhere in the rest of **Cambridgeshire** - Contact Forever Active on **07432 480105**.
- **Peterborough** - Contact Vivacity on **01733 864764**.

For more information and to hear how strength and balance exercises have helped others, visit: [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/strongerforlonger](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/strongerforlonger) or [www.healthypeterborough.org.uk/](http://www.healthypeterborough.org.uk/)

1



**How can I make it more challenging?**

When you can do this with ease, try using your arms less, and work towards not using them at all.

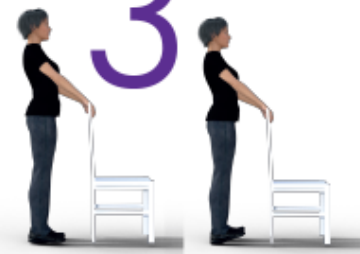
#### SIT TO STAND

Sit up tall near the front of your chair. Place your feet slightly back and hip width apart. Lean forward slightly and stand up - using your hands on the chair if needed. Stand tall then step back until your legs touch the chair. Slowly as you can lower your bottom back into the chair - using your hands on the chair if needed.

**Repeat 10 times.**

This will strengthen the muscles in your thighs and bottom.

3



**How can I make it more challenging?**

Try to use your support less.

#### TOE RAISES

Stand tall with your feet hip width apart. Hold your support if needed. Slowly lift the front of your foot so that the weight is back in your heels. Try not to stick your bottom out. Aim to lift for a slow count of 3 and lower for a slow count of 5.

**Repeat 10 times.**

This will help to strengthen your ankles and shin muscles.

5



**How can I make it more challenging?**

Try walking backwards.

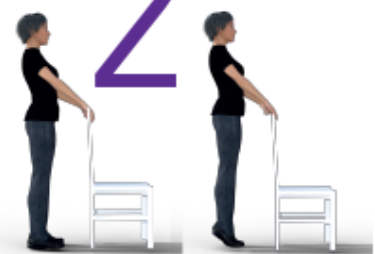
#### HEEL TOE WALKING

Stand tall side on to your support. Walk 10 steps forward placing one foot directly in front of the other so that your feet form a straight line. Look ahead and aim for a slow steady walking action. Only hold on if you need to. Take your feet back to hip width apart before turning and slowly turn towards your support.

**Repeat the steps in the other direction.**

This will help to strengthen your ankles and improve balance.

2



**How can I make it more challenging?**

Try to use your support less.

#### HEEL RAISES

Stand tall with your feet hip width apart. Hold your support if needed. Slowly lift up your heels, keeping the weight over your big toes. Try not to lock your knees. Aim to lift for a slow count of 3 and lower for a slow count of 5.

**Repeat 10 times.**

This will help to strengthen your ankles.

4



**How can I make it more challenging?**

Try to use your support less and hold the position for longer.

#### HEEL TOE STAND

Stand tall with your feet hip width apart. Hold your support if needed. Place one foot in front of the other so that your feet form a straight line. Look ahead and balance for 10 seconds - without holding on if possible. Take your feet back to hip width apart. Repeat with the other foot in front.

**Repeat twice on each foot.**

This will help to strengthen your ankles and improve balance.

6



**How can I make it more challenging?**

Try to use your support less and hold position for longer.

#### ONE LEG STAND

Stand close to your support and hold on. Balance on one leg, keeping your supporting leg straight but your knee soft. Stand tall and look ahead. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat with the other leg.

**Repeat twice on each foot.**

This will help to strengthen your ankles and legs and improve balance.