

What's in the *Healthy Steps* Guide?

Living in Silicon Valley

Page

- 2** How to Use This Guide
- 4** Active Every Day
- 6** Find Things to Do in Your Community
- 8** Explore Your Interests

Staying Healthy

- 10** Eat Healthy Foods
- 12** Stress, Worry, and Sleep
- 14** Depression and Sadness
- 16** Live Well with a Chronic Condition
- 18** Shoes and Feet
- 20** Work with Your Doctor
- 22** Prevent Injuries and Falls
- 24** Make Your Home Safer

Being Active

- 26** Fitness After Fifty
- 28** Fitting Fitness In
- 30** Exercise Safety
- 32** Aerobics and Heart Health
- 34** Walking
- 36** Tai Chi, Yoga, and Other Activities
- 38** Swimming and Pool Exercise

Exercises to Do at Home

Page

- 40** Warm Up and Cool Down
- 42** Balance Basics
- 44** Build Strength at Any Age
- 46** More Exercises for Strength
- 48** Strengthen Your Back
- 50** Stay Flexible
- 52** Fit as You Sit

Resources

- 54** Find the Resource You Need
- 55** Parks and Outdoor Recreation
- 56** Community and Senior Centers
- 58** Food, Nutrition, and Gardening
- 59** Health Information and Assistance
- 60** Health Care Services
- 62** Learning, Volunteering, Employment
- 63** Resources for Seniors and Caregivers
- 64** Home Safety and Fall Prevention
- 65** Home Safety Checklist



Active Every Day

You can be healthier by being active in your everyday life. And you can start at any age—even if you have not been active before. The best way to be active is to do what you enjoy—gardening, dancing, playing with your grandchildren, walking with a friend—anything that gets you up and moving.



© Shalom Ormsby/Blend Images/Getty Images

Being Active Can Help You...

- Have more energy.
- Control your weight.
- Lower your risk for heart disease.
- Lower your risk for type 2 diabetes.
- Keep your balance and prevent falls.
- Reduce aches and pains.

Be More Active with Family or Friends

- Find regular times to walk together.
- Take a class together at a community center near you. See pages 56–57.
- Walk grandchildren to and from school.
- Do the **Healthy Trails Challenge**. You get a prize when you do 5 local hikes in one year. Call **408-355-2201** or visit **www.parkhere.org**.

◀ **My Grandchild Keeps Me Active**

When Lou retired, he started walking his granddaughter to school and back. “We walk almost 2 miles a day. I love our time together.”



© Mark Tantrum

Things You Can Do

Get Up and Move Every 30 Minutes

Most adults watch TV 4 hours a day. Watching TV puts you in an inactive mood, so get up and move often. You will be less stiff and have more energy.

- ▶ Stand up and stretch.
- ▶ Walk to the TV to change channels.
- ▶ Get a glass of water during commercials.
- ▶ Do the sitting exercises on pages 52–53.
- ▶ Do the Sit to Stand exercise on page 47.

Set an Active Mood

- ▶ Turn off the TV. Put on some music.
- ▶ Open some windows or turn on a fan.
- ▶ Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.

Get More Out of What You Do Every Day

You do not have to set aside a lot of time to be active. Think about the things you do already. Then look for ways to make them more active.

- ▶ Sweep, mop, or vacuum with a lot of energy. Then stretch.
- ▶ Walk all or part of the way to the store. Or park at the far end of the parking lot.
- ▶ Try the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.
- ▶ Stretch your legs when you're on the phone—stand up, walk around.

▲ Find a Place to Garden

Many cities have community gardens like Guadalupe Gardens in San Jose. To find one, call **San Jose Community Gardens** at **408-793-4165**.

Get More Out of Gardening

- Start and end slowly with 10–15 minutes of sweeping or raking.
- Then do your harder work. Dig, shovel, mow the lawn, or turn the compost.
- Don't overdo it. Remember to stand up and stretch every 10 minutes or so.
- When you shovel or lift, bend your knees and hips. Keep your back straight. See page 22.
- Stretch at the end so your muscles don't cramp up.

Did you know?

Exercise can help you control chronic pain. **See page 17.**

Fitting Fitness In

How do you find time to be active? Choose activities you enjoy and make them part of your routine. Even better, make being active part of your family's routine. Being fit takes some time each day. But it is time that benefits you and the people around you.

▼ Family Time

A weekend walk, with 3 generations and the family pet, keeps everyone active.



Courtesy of Andrea Spurgeon



© Dave & Les Jacobs/Blend Images/Getty Images

▲ Meeting a Goal

Inez was having trouble getting up from a couch. "I was afraid of getting weaker. I found an aerobics class at my community center. Getting up from my couch is easier now."

Be More Active with Family And Friends

- Take a brisk walk before having lunch or dinner together.
- Bike, swim, or do yoga together.
- Take grandchildren to the park or zoo.
- If your family won't join you, be active with friends or a group.

Things You Can Do

Set Goals and Keep Track of Your Progress

- Set small, realistic goals. “This month I will walk 20 minutes on 3 days a week.”
- Make your goal something you can measure. “I will take an exercise class 2 times a week” is easier to measure than “I will get fit.”
- Track your activities on a calendar.
- If you do not meet a goal, make it easier.
- After a few weeks, set a new goal.

Make a Routine

We are more likely to do things that are part of our daily routine. If your goal is to walk 30 minutes on most days, think about how you can work that into your everyday life. Can you walk during your lunch break or before dinner?

If You Are Too Tired

The less active you are, the less energy you have. But you can break the cycle. Start slowly and use your prime time. For some people that's the morning. For others it's the evening. Make your natural energy work for you.

Don't Have Enough Time?

- ▶ Take a 1-minute break: do a balance exercise.
- ▶ Take a 10-minute break: lift a few weights or take a short, brisk walk.
- ▶ Take a 20-minute break: do a DVD exercise program. Briskly rake leaves or sweep the floor.
- ▶ Get up early: do a DVD or TV exercise program, or walk to work.
- ▶ Use your lunch break: walk with a co-worker.

Bored?

- ▶ Do different activities on different days.
- ▶ Do activities you enjoy. Garden. Go bowling.
- ▶ Do things with people. Join a walking group or sign up for a class.
- ▶ Learn something new. There are many programs listed on pages 56–57.

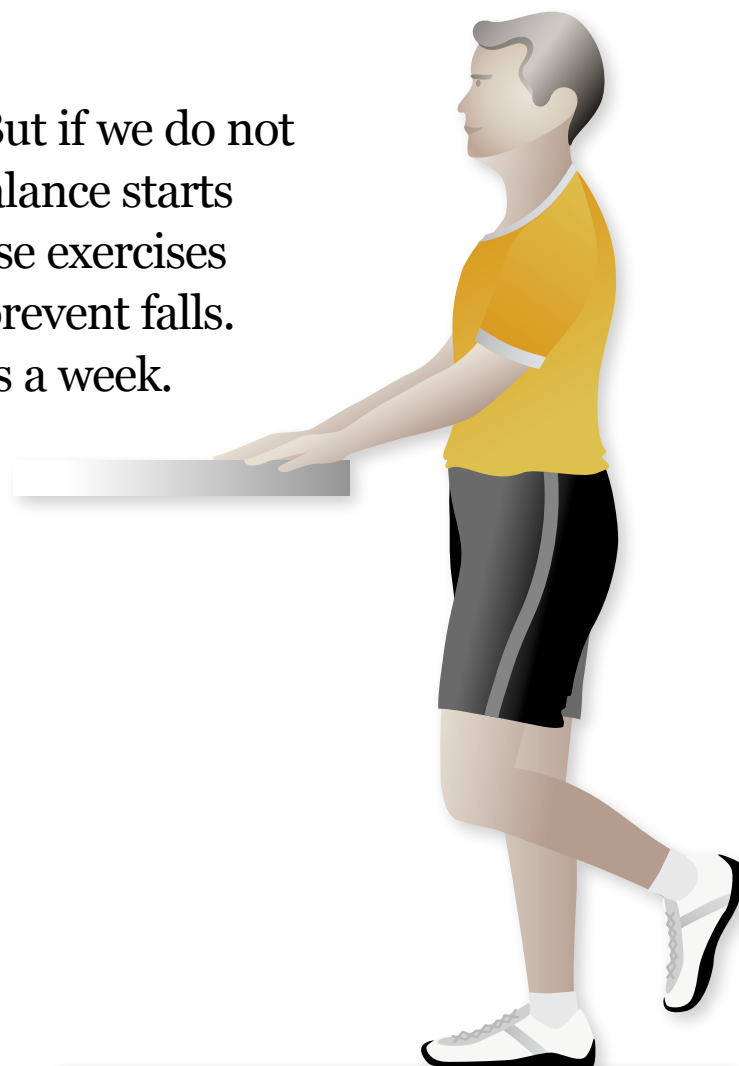
Have a Back-Up Plan

Many things can get in the way of your routine—an ache or a pain, bad weather, or guests. This is when you need a back-up plan.

- ▶ Tai Chi and swimming are great back-ups because they are very gentle. See pages 36–39.
- ▶ If the weather keeps you in, walk in a mall or take a class at a community center.
- ▶ Keep some DVDs to use.
- ▶ Invite guests to join you in your routine.
- ▶ For tips on dealing with walking aches and pains, see page 35.

Balance Basics

Most of us take balance for granted. But if we do not practice balance skills, our sense of balance starts to decline when we are about 30. These exercises will help you keep your balance and prevent falls. Try to practice balance at least 3 times a week.



How We Balance

Many skills work together to keep us steady. To balance, we use:

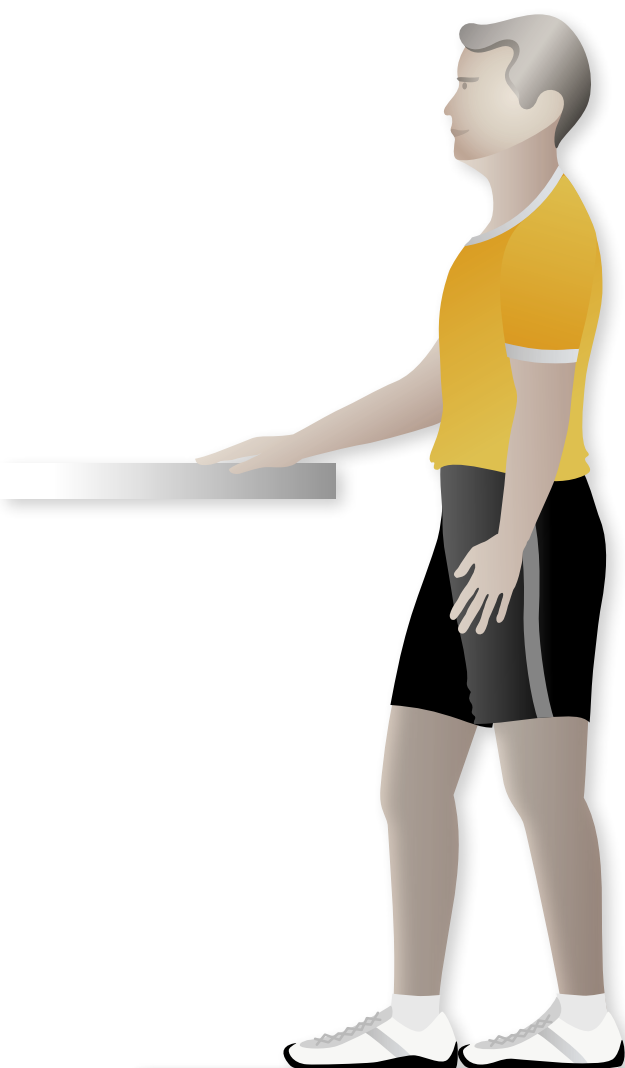
- The strength in our abdomen, back, legs, feet, and ankles.
- Our eyes—to see where we are and what is around us.
- Our inner ear, which helps us keep our balance when we turn quickly.
- The feeling of the ground beneath our feet.
- An inner awareness of where the parts of the body are, so we can even balance with our eyes closed.

One-Leg Stand

This helps you stay steady when you have one foot off the floor.

- 1** Stand facing a counter. Put both hands on the counter.
- 2** When you feel steady, lift one foot off the floor.
- 3** Hold your balance and count slowly to 10.
- 4** Put your foot back on the floor.
- 5** Do 5 times with each foot.

To make it harder: Try it with one hand, one finger, or no fingers on the counter. Try it with your eyes closed.

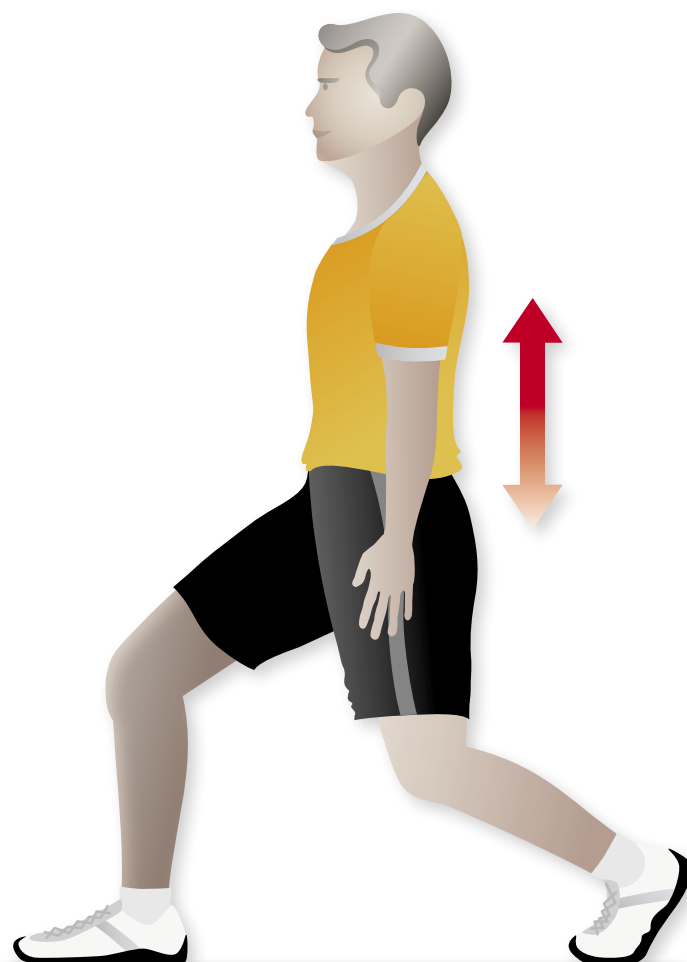


Tightrope Walk

This helps keep you from falling, even when you are a little off balance.

- 1** Stand with your side to a counter.
- 2** Place one hand on the countertop.
- 3** Put one foot in front of the other, heel to toe.
- 4** Bring your back foot to the front and balance. Take one step and balance again.
- 5** Keep walking heel to toe until you reach the end of the counter.
- 6** Then turn around and walk back.

To make it harder: Put one finger, or no fingers, on the counter. Try walking backwards.



Lunge

This helps you balance when you get up and down. It also strengthens your thighs and buttocks.

- 1** Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart.
- 2** Take a big step backwards with one leg.
- 3** Keep your hips facing forward. Slowly lower your back knee toward the floor.
- 4** Straighten your back leg as you rise up.
- 5** Do 8–12 times on each side.

To make it harder: Hold weights.