

Keys to Better Balance: Community and Instructor Resource

STATIC, DYNAMIC, DYNAMIC GAIT, DUAL TASK TRAINING

*To be used in conjunction with "Keys to Better Balance: Instructor Resource and Keys to Better Balance: Community Resource" documents.

STATIC BALANCE

1. Full/semi tandem standing: Instruct participants to stand behind a sturdy chair or counter to hold if necessary. Arms may be positioned wherever is comfortable for the participant (out to sides, on hips, etc.) Instruct participants to stand in a comfortable position with feet shoulder-width apart. Next, bring one foot forward, placing the heel in front of the toes of the other foot (Full tandem position). Hold this position for 10 seconds to start, increasing time as participants are able up to 1 minute. Ensure to alternate which foot is in front. If the full tandem position is too challenging, instruct participants to place the heel of the forward foot next to the instep of the other foot.
2. One leg standing: Instruct patients to stand behind a sturdy chair or counter to hold if necessary. Arms may be positioned wherever is comfortable for the participant (out to sides, on hips, etc.) Next, instruct participants to lift one foot by bending the knee, to about calf height. Hold this position for 10 seconds to start, increasing time as participants are able up to 30 seconds. Ensure to practice lifting alternate feet.
3. Standing on toes: Instruct patients to stand behind a sturdy chair or counter to hold if necessary. Feet should be in a comfortable position, about shoulder-width apart. Arms may be positioned wherever is comfortable for the participant (out to sides, on hips, etc.) Instruct participants to rise onto toes. Hold this position for 5 seconds to start, increasing time as participants are able up to 10 seconds.

DYNAMIC BALANCE

1. Sit to stand:
 - Sit on chair that is not too low, approximately 17-18" high
 - Scoot to edge of chair so there is space between the back of your knees and the chair
 - Place your feet shoulder width apart, feet tucked under knees, one foot may be slightly ahead of the other
 - Lean or hinge forward so your nose is over toes
 - Use arm rests if needed and stand up slowly. As strength increases, hand support can decrease from 2 hands to one, to light touch to no hand support
 - Stand for 5 seconds
 - Before return to sitting, feel the chair touch the back of the legs to assure you are close enough to chair before sitting down
 - Bend at your hips and reach for arm rests
 - Slowly lower yourself with your legs, use arms only for balance.
 - Don't plop
 - Repeat 5-10x
2. SIDE STEPPING:
 - Stand up tall and look straight ahead
 - Place your hands on your hips
 - Take a step to the right with your right leg, then close with left leg so you are standing with your feet shoulder width apart
 - Repeat this movement so you take 10 steps to the right
 - Then take 10 steps to the left in same manner



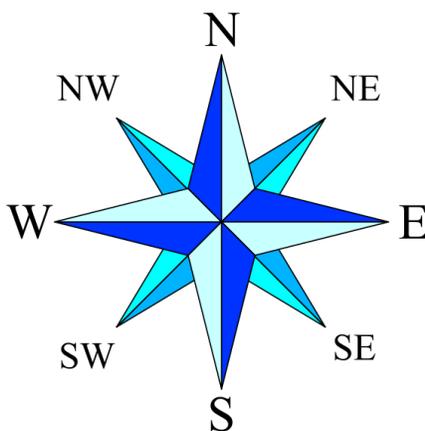
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3. IN AND OUT OF DOG HOUSE IN DIRECTIONS OF COMPASS (Directional Lunges):
- Start with feet shoulder width apart, knees soft or slightly bent
 - Step forward or north slowly “out of dog house” with right leg, shift weight mostly to right leg, then step back into dog house, then step forward or north with left leg, shift weight mostly to left leg then step back into dog house
 - Step in forward diagonal or to northeast direction and back with right leg, step in forward diagonal or northwest direction with left leg and back with left leg, always going out of dog house and back into dog house with one leg before proceeding to the other leg.
 - Repeat sequences to east with right leg and west direction with left leg
 - Repeat sequences to southeast with right leg, southwest direction with left leg
 - Repeat to south or backward direction with right leg and left leg
 - Emphasize “style points”: shift weight to leg stepping, make sure knee does not go forward of toes, make sure center of knee stays close to center of foot, head should be looking straight ahead (not at feet), can vary speeds



DYNAMIC GAIT TRAINING

1. Figure eight walking: Place 2 markers (preferably cones) approximately 6 feet apart from each other on a straight line. Instruct participants to walk towards the first cone and pass by it on the right of the cone. Next, pass by the second cone to the left side of the cone. Turn and repeat, forming a figure 8 walking path. To increase participant challenge, bring cones close together or have participant pass by the cones more closely.
2. Walking with head turns: While walking at a comfortable pace, instruct participants to turn their heads to the right and keep walking for about another 10 feet. Next turn their heads left and keep walking for 10 feet again. Finally, return to forward head to complete the walk. Using the same instructions, participants can also walk while looking upward and downward. To challenge this activity, walking speeds can be increased. Caution with head turn speeds as this may cause dizziness or vertigo.
3. High stepping: marching step bringing knee towards chest. Vary speed and height of step for challenge. Going slowly will increase balance challenge.



BALANCE EXERCISE IDEAS:

STATIC, DYNAMIC, DYNAMIC GAIT, DUAL TASK

TRAINING DUAL TASK TRAINING

Dual tasking is when you are doing something cognitive while doing something physical, like walking and talking. To make dual tasking beneficial you want to select an activity that is somewhat challenging versus something that is automatic. The brain will shift focus between the motor task and the cognitive task. This shifting focus enhances brain activity and benefits motor skills, specifically, improving balance and improving brain health. The cognitive activity could be singing a song, calling out the exercise steps or counting in Spanish. A great first class in any fitness program could include memorizing and repeating the group members' names while doing stretches (like playing the campfire game matching names to arm motions). The key is to be a little challenging but not so hard that you need to stop the physical activity to perform the cognitive task or vice versa. If either task is too easy you don't reap the benefits.

Some examples of cognitive tasks that could happen while exercising include:

1. Identifying things you hear such as "name that tune"
2. Changing the exercises spontaneously as they are called out
3. Naming things or solving a word or picture puzzle on a screen, a poster or in a book.
4. Visual searches like found in adult puzzle books, including crosswords.
5. Changing the counting of reps such as backwards, in Spanish or by 2s or 3s.
6. Any type of memory tasks, such as group members' names, new steps to a dance or exercise, etc.
7. Telling stories that involve extra thought such as continuing from one person to another or including rhymes.

For Video examples of the Balance Exercise components visit our YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLI4xB4BgGBoVfpjk8kVBx93KXAX3MmTir>

