

# MOVE TO BE STRONG!



## VON SMART NEWSLETTER



JANUARY 2023

### Home is the most common place for older adults to fall.

January is here, so why not start the year out right. You can do this simply by walking through your home to make sure it supports a happy fall-free lifestyle.

Here are 6 questions to ask yourself when making your home a safer place:

1. **Is my path clean and clear?** Clear the clutter from high traffic areas like the stairs or hallways.
2. **Is there something I can hold for extra balance?** Installing safe guards. Such as handrails on either side of the stairs.
3. **Is this damaged or broken?** Does anything need to be repaired (handrails, stairs, carpets)
4. **Can I trip over this?** Remove carpets, rugs, wires that present a tripping hazard.
5. **Can I slip on this?** Prevent falls with the use non-slip rugs and non-skid mats or abrasive strips where they are needed.
6. **Can I see where I am going?** Install night lights in the bedroom, bathroom, and hallways

### The VON SMART Program

Helping to keep our community dwelling older adults active, engaged and free from falls!

For more information about SMART exercise classes and fall prevention workshops please contact:

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**Holiday SMART Class FUN from Across the District**





## Did You Know?

If you take care of your overall health, you may have a lower chance of falling. **Most falls are preventable as the known risks are treatable!** Here are a few tips to help you reduce your risk of falls and fall related injuries:

- Stay physically active! Plan an exercise program that is right for you. Regular exercise improves your strength and balance
- Fall-proof your home. Be sure to go through your home with the 6 questions above about your home environment in mind
- Have your eyes and hearing tested. Small changes in vision and hearing are linked to an increased risk for falls
- Find out about the side effects of any medicines you take. If you experience any side-effect tell your doctor or pharmacist
- Get enough sleep. If you are tired, you are more likely to fall.
- Make sure you are using assistive devices like canes or walkers currently, they are fitted to you and are in good working order
- Choose the right footwear. To fully support your feet, wear nonskid, rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes.
- Always tell your doctor if you have fallen since your last check-up, even if you did not feel pain when you fell. A fall can alert your doctor to a new medical problem or issues



## Monthly Feature: VON SMART Instructor



**Megan North**

Megan has been with the VON SMART program since November 2022, she enjoys facilitating exercise classes for Retirement Homes and community settings.

She has been working as a Kinesiologist since 2017. She has worked in a variety of settings including the Chatham Kent Community Health Centres, a chiropractic office, local fitness facilities and now with the VON SMART team.

Megan is a lifelong learner. She has recently completed her Master of Clinical Science – Interprofessional Pain Management at Western University. She is also a certified yoga instructor, personal trainer and group fitness instructor.

Megan has been involved in the fitness industry since 2014. She has led a wide variety of age groups from toddlers to seniors.

Outside of work she enjoys being active with friends and family. She fills her time with baseball, soccer, volleyball and hockey. She also enjoys her time in the sun, helping out on the family farm.

**The Importance of Fall Prevention in Reducing the Risk of a Broken Bone**  
[www.osteoporosis.ca](http://www.osteoporosis.ca)

Although falls can happen to anyone, fall prevention is especially important for the elderly and individuals with osteoporosis who have a higher risk of breaking a bone during a fall, than those without osteoporosis. Among older adults, falls cause 63% to 83 % of hip and non-spine fractures and about 45% of spine fractures.

**Falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospital stays among older adults in**

**Canada.** Approximately 30% of those aged 65 years and older and 50% of those over 80 – fall at least once each year and those who fall are two to three times more likely to fall again. Falls can cause soft tissue injuries, head trauma, sprained wrists and ankles, fear of falling again, fractures and sometimes even death. The good news is that falls, and the injuries they cause, can be prevented.

**WHAT CAN PEOPLE DO TO PREVENT FALLING?**

People with osteoporosis, and those at risk of developing it, can prevent bone loss, fractures and falls by following an exercise program that combines weight bearing, strength training, balance and posture exercises

**Some specific things to be aware of in winter and especially during the holiday season:**

- Most falls occur indoors, inside the home.
- Make sure your indoor shoes are just as safe as your outdoor boots, i.e., that they have a non-skid sole and can't slip off your feet.
- Inside, be aware of obstacles and potential tripping hazards. Over the holiday season, more people visiting may mean more loose items on the floor such as shoes, purses, gifts, gift wrap and spilled drinks.
- If younger children are visiting be aware of toys, mittens, coats, sweaters, scarves, hats and anything else that isn't attached.
- People may track snow into your hallway or foyer. Be sure to wipe up wet spots as soon as possible to avoid slipping on them. Door mats can also be used to absorb melting snow provided they are non-slip and non-trip with a good rubber backing.
- Outside your front door, wet or icy surfaces can be slippery and can cause a fall. Tread carefully and use handrails whenever ascending or descending stairs, no matter how few the number of steps.
- Keep the stairs and sidewalks of your home clear of snow and ice and sanded or salted to prevent slips.

**VON Updates**

VON SMART in partnership with the Windsor Public Library is pleased to announce that the exercise classes will be continuing at the following branches:

- Budimir: Tuesdays at 10:30am
- Riverside: Tuesdays at 12:30pm

VON SMART in partnership with Community Support Centre of Essex County will be offering a **FREE** 5-week DRÖM workshop at the Essex Retirees Club starting January 10<sup>th</sup> at 1pm

**Questions?** Please call 519-254-4866 Ext. 6239

**As a reminder there will be no classes on**

- **Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023**



**VON SMART Exercise & Fall Prevention**

Windsor-Essex | Chatham-Kent | Sarnia-Lambton

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<http://www.vonsmart.ca/>