

MOVE TO BE STRONG!



VON SMART NEWSLETTER



MAY 2022

VON SMART is excited to announce an extension to our partnership with Centre Communautaire La Girouette.

In an effort to better meet the needs of all of our VON SMART participants and partners, we are working closely with Centre Communautaire La Girouette and their team to distribute the French version of the VON SMART monthly newsletter. It will be made available from the following locations

- On the VON SMART website <http://www.vonsmart.ca/>
- Hardcopy print at Centre Communautaire La Girouette
- Upon email request to Meghan Simon or Centre Communautaire La Girouette cclagirouette@gmail.com



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:

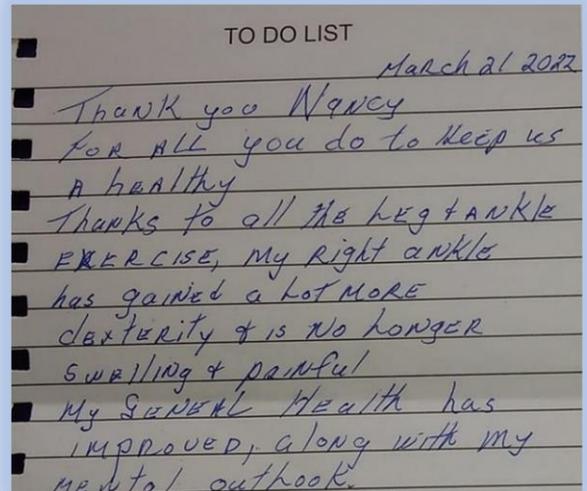
- Khrista Boon, Supervisor Erie St. Clair (khrista.boon@von.ca)
- Melissa Baldock, Coordinator Windsor-Essex (melissa.baldock@von.ca)
- Meghan Simon, Coordinator Chatham-Kent (meghan.simon@von.ca)



Fitness Friends!



Featured in this image is Betty, she is a resident at a Chartwell Rest and Retirement Home in Windsor-Essex. She presented the VON SMART instructor with a lovely note that reflects on the improvements she has experienced through participating in the VON SMART exercise classes. Thank you, Betty, for your kind words!



Featured in this image is SMART Program Supervisor Khrista B and Program Coordinator for Chatham-Kent Meghan S. They were given the opportunity to present to the OTA/PTA students at ST Clair College in Chatham. A special thank you to their Professor Philip Rance for inviting us.

Did You Know?

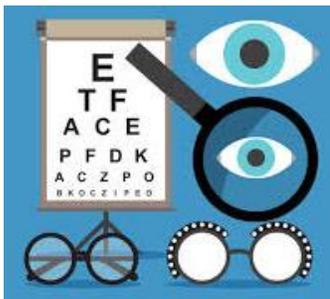
May is Vision Health Month

As you age you can experience changes in your vision. Unfortunately, these vision changes and poor vision can increase your risk of falling. Is it important that you visit your optometrist or ophthalmologist for a comprehensive eye exam every year. This will ensure you have the proper prescription for your glasses to optimize your vision. This also provides an opportunity to check for any early signs or progression of eye disease

Tips for Vision Care to Reduce your Risk for Falls

- Keep your glasses clean
- Protect your eyes. Wear sunglasses even in the winter
- Look through the proper lens with activities
- Take your time and allow your eyes to adjust to changes in light
- Some medications can have an effect on your vision. Be sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist if you experience this
- Ensure rooms are well lit and have similar lighting throughout
- Decrease shine/glare in the home
- Use nightlights or motion sensing lights in your hallways and bathroom
- Be sure to take your time if you experience a loss in depth perception. This can make it difficult to judge stairs, curbs or tripping hazards.
- Be aware of mask related glasses fogging

Taking care of your eye health will help you to stay independent and reduce your risk for fall.



Monthly Feature: VON SMART Instructor



Melissa Baldock

Melissa has been with the VON SMART Program for over four years, starting as a Fitness Instructor and now as the Program Coordinator for Windsor-Essex. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Health Sciences, (Hons.) Kinesiology and has been a Registered Kinesiologist since 2014. Recently, she returned to school and has since successfully completed her coursework, graduating with academic honours with a diploma in Recreation Therapy. Melissa is originally from the Barrie area and moved to Windsor in 2015 with her husband and two dogs. In 2020, Melissa became a mother to a smart, curious little girl who keeps her very busy, she just returned from maternity leave and is looking forward to resuming her role within the program. She holds several certifications and enjoys lifelong learning, always interested in expanding her knowledge base and sharing what she learns with those around her. Melissa believes that movement is medicine and that it is never too late to get moving.

Resources

McMaster Optimal Aging Portal

[Healthy Aging Research | McMaster Optimal Aging Portal](#)

Watch your step! Fall prevention for seniors living in the community

[Watch your step! Fall prevention for seniors living in the community \(mcmasteroptimalaging.org\)](#)



For older adults, the risk of falling is very real. In fact, nearly 20% of older adults in Canada who live at home reported at least one fall in 2008/2009, while over 250,000 reported an injury related to falls in 2009/2010.

There are many reasons why older adults fall, including chronic conditions, balance problems, poor vision, cognitive impairment, side effects from medications, improper footwear, and previous falls. With so many factors threatening to knock older adults off their feet, the fear of falling is no laughing matter. Fortunately, there are things you can do to keep your feet safely on the ground. Exercise, for example, is well known to prevent falls in long-term care homes. But what can exercise do for the 92% of older adults in Canada living independently in the community?

What the research tells us

It turns out that exercise – alone or in combination with other strategies – can help reduce the chance that older adults living in the community will fall.

One systematic review found that exercise alone – carried out 3 times per week for about 12 months – may lower the risk of falls generally, and specifically falls that lead to injuries. Most studies evaluated strategies focused on improving walking speed, balance, and muscle strength. Beneficial exercises included tai chi, resistance training, and exercises aimed at improving flexibility. While exercise was sometimes associated with minor pain, bruising, or fall-related injuries/fractures, it did not increase the risk of serious injuries.

Another systematic review and meta-analysis also showed that exercise alone or combined with other strategies prevented falls, and particularly falls leading to injuries. Strategies such as orthotics, hip protectors, patient quality improvement initiatives (i.e. self-management, education), and environmental assessment and modification activities, when combined with exercise, were all found to reduce the risk of experiencing a fall. More so, the risk of more serious falls leading to injury was reduced when exercise was combined with vision tests and treatment, and when these two strategies were combined with efforts to eliminate risk factors from one's environment. Unfortunately, the results of the review also indicated that exercise combined with certain strategies could lead to an increased risk of falling, as well as increased risk of an injury as a result of a fall. This heightened risk in some individuals could stem from their increased ability to move around as a result of exercising, however, any risk should be balanced with the need to improve mobility.

For older adults still living at home, falling should not be considered inevitable. There are many things you can do to keep your feet firmly planted on the ground. Exercise may be an excellent option, but you should speak with your health care provider, and consider your own values and preferences, when deciding which strategy is best for you.

VON Updates

No Classes Monday May 23rd, 2022



VON SMART Exercise & Fall Prevention

Windsor-Essex | Chatham-Kent | Sarnia-Lambton

Khrista Boon, Program Supervisor: khrista.boon@von.ca

Melissa Baldock, Coordinator melissa.baldock@von.ca

Meghan Simon, Coordinator: meghan.simon@von.ca

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