

# MOVE TO BE STRONG!



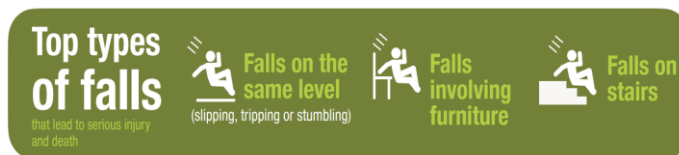
## VON SMART NEWSLETTER



NOVEMBER 2023

November is Fall Prevention Month. It is a public awareness campaign, with the theme “It takes a community to prevent a fall: We all have a role to play.” When someone has a fall, it affects that individual, their family, the community, and the health care system. Thought experiencing a fall can be a life-changing event, most falls are preventable. Becoming aware of and treating fall risk factors can help minimize the chance of experiencing an injurious fall.

The most common falls occur:



Be PROACTIVE instead of REACTIVE:

- Attend a fall prevention workshop
- Participate in an exercise program that targets balance and functional movement training
- Regular health check-ins
  - Vision/hearing changes
  - Foot health
  - Medications review
  - Diet/Nutrition
- Home Safety Assessment
- Social support to help address loneliness, decreased confidence and fear of falling

### 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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# Exercises at the Kitchen Sink for Balance

## Adding movement to your at-home routine

### REMEMBER TO:

- Check with your healthcare provider before you start a new exercise program.
- Wear comfortable, supportive footwear.
- Use a firm, stable chair, countertop, or wall for support.
- Start with five repetitions of each exercise. Add one or two every day until you reach 15 repetitions.
- Be aware that muscle soreness after exercise is normal.

## While you get breakfast



### STANDING LEG CURL

- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Shift weight onto one leg
- Bend other knee
- Raise heel toward buttocks as far as it is comfortable
- Return to starting position
- **Repeat on each leg up to 15 times**



### SIDE LEG LIFT

- Stand with feet together, hold the counter for support
- Shift weight onto one leg
- Raise the other leg out to the side
- Keep your back straight and tall
- Slowly return leg to the floor
- **Repeat on each leg up to 15 times**



### HEEL RAISE

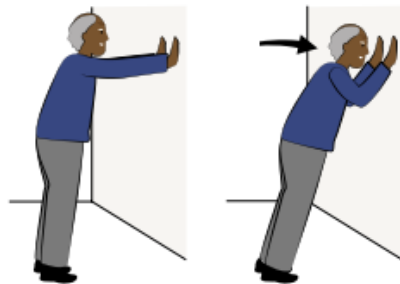
- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Hold onto the counter and look forward
- Slowly raise both heels off the floor, standing on toes
- Hold for 5-10 seconds
- Return to start position
- **Repeat up to 15 times**



### TOE RAISE

- Stand with feet hip-width apart
- Hold onto the counter and look forward
- Slowly raise toes off the floor, putting weight onto heels
- Hold for 5-10 seconds
- Return to start position
- **Repeat up to 15 times**

## After lunch



### WALL PUSH-UP

- Facing a wall, stand arms' length away and place hands on the wall at shoulder height, and shoulder-width apart
- Tighten the abdominal muscles
- Keeping back and legs straight, bend elbows while lowering upper body toward the wall
- Hold for 2-3 seconds
- Straighten arms pushing against the wall and return to starting position
- Keep elbows slightly bent
- **Repeat up to 15 times**

## While watching your favourite TV show

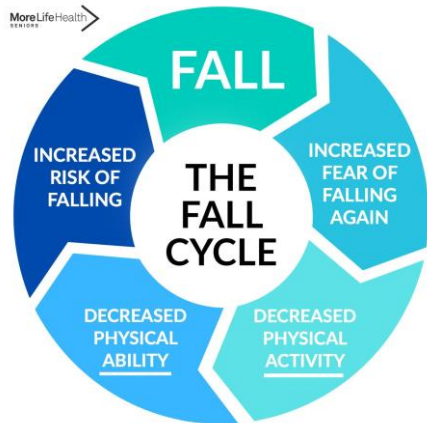


### SIT TO STAND

- Sit in a chair, feet hip-width apart
- Slowly stand up half way, both arms outstretched
- Make sure your knees do not come forward past your toes
- Keep your hips, knees, and ankles in line
- Stand up straight and tall, then return to seated position
- **Repeat up to 15 times**

## Did You Know...

**Fear of Falling (FOF) can increase fall risk in older adults?**



The term 'fear of falling' (FOF) describes an exaggerated concern of falling that frequently leads to a self-imposed restriction in activities. The fearful older person narrows her world, often resulting in social isolation and a spiraling physical, emotional, and functional decline until even simple acts like taking a bath or walking to the mailbox are insurmountable tasks.

In many respects, FOF is a rational response to a likely and potentially dangerous event. A cautious concern with falling could be viewed as the first step in a fall prevention approach. However, too much fear can compromise the physical and mental wellbeing of the older person. It can have serious negative effects, such as reducing an older person's frequency and intensity of physical activity, which can lead to de-conditioning and ultimately increase the risk of falling. Fear of falling can also compromise social interaction, leading to isolation, depression, and anxiety.

### Can Fear of Falling be treated?

Once identified, FOF should be treated on several levels, which includes providing exercise, performing functional evaluations and treatment, meeting social and support needs, and addressing anxiety or depression. This multifactorial approach will help older persons remain active, socially engaged, and productive throughout their lifetimes

1. Promoting the view that falls and fear of falling are controllable;
2. Setting realistic goals for increasing activity;
3. Changing the environment to reduce falls risk;
4. Promoting exercise to increase strength and balance

# VON SMART Instructor Feature!



I am a wife, a mother, a grandmother, a retired medical laboratory scientist and a personal trainer/fitness professional.

My fitness journey began in the early 80s in the aerobics era. I started teaching DanceFit and then DanceNStretch when my instructor asked me to become an instructor. I did some choreography for the DanceNStretch program. I taught fitness classes part-time while working as a Medical Laboratory Scientist in the hospital. I later became certified as a personal trainer, hoping to start my own business. However, the opportunity to enter hospital management came along simultaneously, so I continued to do both with training part-time.

I have always loved exercise at an individual level. I was in track and field in grade school and high school. While in high school in the '70s, my physical education teacher offered a spring shape-up program every year, much like an '80s aerobics program. I loved it and was inspired by it, which is what started me on my fitness journey.

I have always been interested in the VON SMART program. I applied to the program several years ago, but my full-time hospital schedule was incompatible with the SMART program schedule. I have the time now, so I used a few months ago. I enjoy teaching the classes I have been teaching this last month, along with my class for Assumption Cares, a free class offered to the community.

I have not yet seen the Barbie movie, which is shocking because I have a collection of over 100 Barbies in their original boxes.

**WELCOME DONNA!**



## Resources

### McMaster Optimal Aging Portal

#### JUDO FOR OLDER ADULTS: LEARNING TO FALL (SAFELY)

([mcmasteroptimalaging.org](http://mcmasteroptimalaging.org))



Did you know that almost a third of Canadians aged 60 and over are at risk of at least one fall this year? Unfortunately, these falls can have serious consequences and cause fractures, loss of independence and self-confidence. Falls are the leading cause of hospitalization for older adults in Canada. Additionally, those with osteoporosis are even more at risk: more than 80% of fractures in people age 50 and older are attributable to loss of bone density.

Judo is a martial art created in Japan in 1882 by Jigorō Kanō as a physical, mental and moral pedagogy. The term judo in Japanese means the “gentle way”. Often associated with spectacular throws, judo offers several benefits for older adults, from preventing injuries when falling, to improving physical and mental health. Emphasis is placed not only on balance and strength, but also on techniques to learn how to fall safely and thus reduce the risk of injury. Indeed, judo is based on techniques to control falls called ukemis (or “receiving the body” in English).

Ukemis in judo are based on four key principles:

- **the head is the most important part to protect** (so the head must not touch the ground)
- **the lower you fall, the less you hurt yourself** (so you have to bend down by bending your legs)
- **rolling hurts less than falling** (it is therefore necessary to round the body as much as possible)
- **the more the ground vibrates when the body hits it, the less the body suffers** (you should slap the ground a millisecond before your body hits the ground).

Falls are always unpredictable and can leave serious consequences for older adults. Can the practice of judo, and more specifically learning ukemis, help prevent fall-related injuries among older adults?

#### What research tells us:

A recent evidence synthesis identified 15 studies on the effects of Judo on the health of adults aged 45-78. Classes, lasted between 45 minutes and 60 minutes, 1 to 3 times a week, were spread over 5 weeks to 24 months, in Judo clubs, healthcare facilities, nursing homes or workplaces.

Classes offered to middle-aged participants focused on throws, body rotation and balance training. Classes dedicated to older participants, it is mainly techniques on the ground or standing, as well as kata (sequences of movements) taught. These classes also included the practice of lateral and backward falls, as well as mobility exercises.

#### All studies reported positive results:

- In older adults (≥60 years), Judo improved physical performance, functional autonomy, balance, strength, gait performance, flexibility and learning fall techniques.
- In middle-aged adults (≥45 years), an increase in bone mineral density, particularly in women receiving medical treatment for osteoporosis, has been demonstrated.
- Quality of life and bone mineral density only seemed to improve in the medium or long term, that is to say after 9 or 12 months of practicing Judo.

While Judo classes can be offered in different settings, one study concluded that it was more effective to take these classes directly at a local Judo club, given the presence of several instructors and protective mats.

#### VON Updates

**We honor those who have given their lives.**



#### VON SMART Exercise & Fall Prevention

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