

WHEENK! HEALTH

A NEW FOOT FORWARD IN 2008

PREVENT FALLS AND REDUCE YOUR RISK OF INJURY
BY GETTING YOUR RIGHT FOOT FORWARD IN 2008.

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SKIPPED ROPE? WALKED ON A BALANCE BEAM? JUMPED ON A TRAMPOLINE? WALKED BETWEEN THE LINES ON THE SIDEWALK OR ALONG A CURB? RODE A BIKE? PLAYED HOPSCOTCH? WELL FOR MOST OF US AS WE GET OLDER WE DO LESS AND LESS OF THESE KINDS OF THINGS. AS WE AGE WE BEGIN TO SIT IN CHAIRS MORE AND ON THE FLOOR LESS. WE SPEND MORE TIME ON TWO FEET THAN ONE AND SPEND MORE TIME ON LEVEL, EVEN, STABLE SURFACES THAN COMPROMISED SURFACES, WHICH MEANS THAT WE CHALLENGE OUR BALANCE LESS AND LESS. BALANCE IS A SKILL WE RETAIN AS LONG AS WE CHALLENGE IT. A MORE SEDENTARY, SAFE ENVIRONMENT MEANS LESS OPPORTUNITY TO CHALLENGE OUR BALANCE. FALLS HAVE BECOME A MAJOR SOURCE OF INJURY IN THE AGING POPULATION. 1 IN 4 PEOPLE OVER THE AGE OF 64 (WHO LIVE AT HOME) WILL FALL DURING THE NEXT YEAR. THE EFFECTS OF AGING ARE THE MOST COMMON CAUSES OF BALANCE PROBLEMS, HOWEVER INJURY AND DISEASE CAN ALSO TRIGGER PROBLEMS.

BALANCE IS THE ABILITY TO CONTROL AND MAINTAIN YOUR BODY'S POSITION AS IT MOVES THROUGH SPACE. YOUR BRAIN, MUSCLES AND BONES WORK TOGETHER TO MAINTAIN YOUR BODY'S BALANCE AND TO KEEP YOU FROM FALLING. STRENGTH, FLEXIBILITY AND ENDURANCE ARE CRUCIAL TO MAINTAINING BALANCE AND PREVENTING FALLS.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT BALANCE IS A SKILL THAT ALMOST ALL OF US CAN KEEP THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES. MUCH OF THE DETERIORATION IN BALANCE ASSOCIATED WITH AGE IS SIMPLY DUE TO NOT USING THIS SKILL. YOU JUST NEED TO RETRAIN YOUR BODY TO MAKE THE MOST OF ITS CAPABILITIES.

HERE ARE A FEW SIMPLE TIPS TO FIT INTO YOUR DAY:

1. STAND ON ONE LEG WHILE BRUSHING YOUR TEETH AND/OR BLOW-DRYING YOUR HAIR.
2. GET UP AND OFF THE FLOOR AT LEAST ONE TIME/ DAY.
3. PUT YOUR SOCKS AND SHOES ON WHILE STANDING UP EACH DAY.

PREVENT FALLS AND REDUCE YOUR RISK OF INJURY BY GETTING YOUR RIGHT FOOT FORWARD IN 2008. (FOR MORE IDEAS ON BALANCE EXERCISES COME SEE US AT WHEENK! PHYSICAL THERAPY).

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