Holy Yoga

Balance

By

Christina Mroz, M-HYI
What is your “falls” IQ?

1. Every year, one out of three older adults 65 and older falls. **True or False**

2. Over half of all falls occur in the home? **True or False**

3. What room do most people fall in their home?

4. Some medications can increase your risk of falling. **True or False**

5. Good nutrition doesn’t matter in preventing falls. **True or False**
What is your falls IQ? Cont.

Approximately how much money is spent each year on injuries from falls?
a. $100,000  b. $500,000  c. Over $20 billion  d. $5 million

What accounts for the most falls that result in death?
a. ladders  b. stairs & steps  c. slippery tile

Most fractures in older adults are caused by falls?  
**True or False**

Only young people can improve their strength and stamina by exercising.  
**True or False**
What is your falls IQ? Cont.

Implementing a fall prevention initiative would be a waste of time and money with older adults? **True or False**

It does not matter what seniors do to avoid falling, they’re going to fall anyway. **True or False**

After you fall, you should acknowledge that you are afraid and reduce your activities? **True or False**

As you get older, you should enhance the lighting in every room in your home. **True or False**
What is your falls IQ? Cont.

If I stay seated most of the time, I will reduce my risk of falling. **True or False**

Having your hearing checked annually is an important step in preventing falls. **True or False**

People who suffer from repeated falls usually experience a decline in overall health, spend more time in the hospital, and are more frequently admitted to nursing homes. **True or False**

Falls is the 7th leading cause of death in older adults. **True or False**
Feet Basics

- **4 Corners** - the 4 corners of your feet should be pressing down as your arches lift upward

- **Praise Toes** - your toes should not be gripping the floor/mat, they should be soft, and spread

- **Neutral** - your second toe should be facing straight forward, the outer edge of your foot should be parallel with the edge of your mat
Balance Exercises

Anytime/Anywhere
This exercise can be done almost anytime, anywhere, and as often as you like, as long as you have something sturdy nearby to hold onto if you become unsteady.

• Walk heel-to-toe. Position your heel just in front of the toes of the opposite foot each time you take a step. Your heel and toes should almost touch.

• Stand on one foot (for example while waiting in line at the grocery store). Alternate feet.

• Stand up and sit down without using your hands.
Balance Exercises

Plantar Flexion
Add this modification when progressing with this exercise: Hold table with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands; then do exercise with eyes closed, if steady.

• Stand straight; hold onto a table or chair for balance. Slowly stand on tiptoe, as high as possible. Hold position for 1 second.

• Slowly lower heels all the way back down. Pause. Repeat 8 to 15 times.

• Now try it with your toes turned out. This will target different muscles.
Balance Exercises

**Side Leg Raise**
Add this modification when progressing with this exercise: Hold table with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands; then do exercise with eyes closed, if steady.

Stand straight, directly behind table or chair, feet slightly apart. Hold onto table or chair for balance. Slowly lift one leg to side 6-12 inches out to side. Keep your back and both legs straight. Don’t point your toes outward; keep them facing forward. Hold position for 1 second. Slowly lower leg all the way down. Pause. Repeat with other leg.

Add modifications as your progress.
Balance Exercises

Hip Extension
Add this modification when progressing with this exercise: Hold table with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands; then do exercise with eyes closed, if steady.

Stand 12 to 18 inches from table or chair with feet slightly apart. Bend forward at hips at about 45-degree angle; hold onto a table or chair for balance. Slowly lift one leg straight backwards without bending your knee, pointing your toes, or bending your upper body any farther forward. Hold position for 1 second. Slowly lower leg. Repeat with other leg.
Balance Exercises

Hip Flexion
Add this modification when progressing with this exercise: Hold table with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands; then do exercise with eyes closed, if steady.

Stand straight; hold onto a table or chair for balance. Slowly bend one knee toward chest, without bending waist or hips. Hold position for 1 second. Slowly lower leg all the way down. Repeat with other leg.

Add modifications as you progress.

You can also turn the chair towards you and try to place the bottom of your foot on the back of the chair.
Balance Exercises

The Eyes Have It

Good balance required input from the environment to give your body the correct signals. Your eyes tell your body a great deal about the space in which you need to move and balance.

Sit in a stable chair with a straight back and arm rests if you need them to get up from a sitting position. Focus your eyes on a target 10 to 20 feet away while you stand up slowly and then sit down again with your eyes open.

Repeat with your eyes closed. Repeat 5 times.
Balance Exercises

Stork Exercise
The stork is one of the simplest exercises to improve balance.

• Stand on one leg, arms at your side, shoulders relaxed.
• To make the stork more challenging, try swinging your arms as if you were running. That will throw you slightly off balance and you will need to make corrections to maintain your balance. You can hold bottles of water in each hand for extra weight for even more of a challenge.
• Another challenge is to try to “spell” your name with the foot in the air.
• For the most challenging stork of all, try any of the above with your eyes closed!
Balance Exercises

The following balance exercises are from the Institute for Wellness and Sports Medicine article “Preventing Falls and Fractures”.

**BALANCE - 1 Standing Side Leans**

Holding on, lean body weight from side to side.

**REPEAT: _____ Times
______ Times a Day.**
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 2 Front Leans

Bring body weight forward and back as far as possible. Try to maintain balance without holding on.

REPEAT: _____ Times
_____ Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 3 Toe Ups

Gently rise up on toes and rock back on heels.

REPEAT: _____Times
______Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 4  Heel Cord Stretch

With right foot in front of left, lean forward keeping left heel flat. Hold 30 seconds while counting out loud. Repeat with opposite foot in front.

REPEAT: _____Times
______Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 5 One-Legged Stands

Standing on one leg, try to maintain balance as long as possible without holding on. Repeat on other leg.

REPEAT: _____ Times
______ Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 6 One-Legged Stands Eyes Closed

Hold on and close eyes.  
Try to balance on one leg.  
Hold as long as possible.  
Repeat on other leg.

REPEAT: _____Times  
 _____Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 7 Toe Stands

Stand on toes as long as possible. Repeat with one foot if possible.

REPEAT: _____ Times
_______ Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 8 Heel Stands

Stand on heels as long as possible. Try to repeat standing on one leg.

REPEAT: _____ Times
_____ Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 9 Head Tilts

Standing on one leg and holding on, tilt head to left and then right. Try to keep balance.

REPEAT: _____ Times
_____ Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 10. Head Tilts Up and Down

Standing on one leg, try to look up and back down.

REPEAT: _____ Times
______ Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 11 Two-Legged Standing Rotation

Standing, look as far as possible to both sides. Try to keep balance.

REPEAT: _____ Times
          _____ Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 12 Head Motion

Stand and look at a stationary object. Keep eyes fixed on object and turn head from left to right.

REPEAT: _____ Times
        _____ Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 13 Eye Motion

Stand and place two targets in front of head. Move eyes from one target to the other as quickly as possible. Avoid getting dizzy or nauseous.

REPEAT: _____Times _____Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 14 Grapevine

Holding onto a heavy object, cross one foot over other and bring back foot up beside front foot. Repeat to other side.

REPEAT: _____ Times
_____ Times a Day.
Balance Exercises

BALANCE - 15 High Stepping

Holding onto a heavy chair, lift knees, taking high steps.

REPEAT: ____ Times
____ Times a Day.
Balance Resources

Exercise: A guide from the National Institute on Aging; 
www.nia.nih.gov/exercisebook/chapter4_balance.htm

Excerpted from the Falls in Older Adults Primary Care Practice Toolkit developed by the Practicing Physician Education Project.

www.diabetesselfmanagement.com
Answers to Fall’s Quiz

1. Every year, one out of three older adults 65 and older falls. True

2. Over half of all falls occur in the home? True
   (60% in the home, 30% in the community, 10% in institutions)

3. What room do most people fall in their home? Bathroom

4. Some medications can increase your risk of falling. True

5. Good nutrition doesn’t matter in preventing falls. False

6. Approximately how much money is spent each year on injuries from falls? c
   a. $100,000  b. 500,000  c. Over $20 billion  d. $5 million

7. What accounts for the most falls that result in death?
   a. ladders  b. stairs & steps  c. slippery tile
   b – More than 42% of falling deaths results from stairs & steps

8. Most fractures in older adults are caused by falls? True (95%)

9. Only young people can improve their strength and stamina by exercising. False
10. Implementing a fall prevention initiative would be a waste of time and money with older adults? False

11. It does not matter what seniors do to avoid falling, they’re going to fall anyway. False

12. After you fall, you should acknowledge that you are afraid and reduce your activities? False Why??

13. As you get older, you should enhance the lighting in every room in your home. True

14. If I stay seated most of the time, I will reduce my risk of falling. False
   Inactivity leads to muscle and joint weakness which may lead to a fall.

15. Having your hearing checked annually is an important step in preventing falls. True
   Hearing plays a part in your balance and space perception. You should have your vision checked annually as well.

16. People who suffer from repeated falls usually experience a decline in overall health, spend more time in the hospital, and are more frequently admitted to nursing homes. True

17. Falls is the 7th leading cause of death in older adults. True