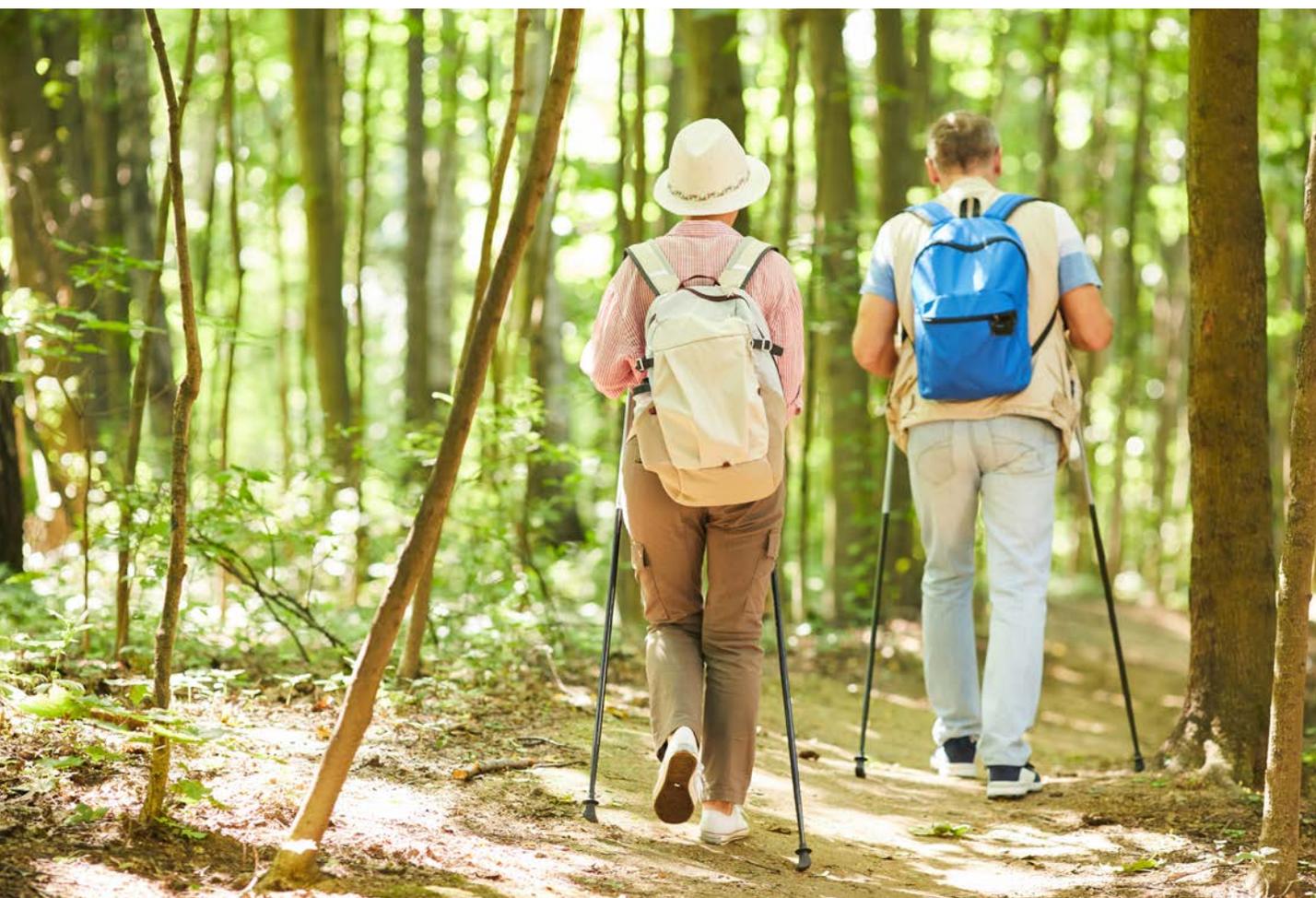




How Walking Poles may Help my Balance

A USER'S GUIDE TO POLE WALKING INFORMATION



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How walking poles may help my balance:

When you use walking poles, you will be holding a pole in each hand. This provides you with **more support and steadiness when walking**. When you feel more stable while walking and use the walking poles safely, this can reduce your chances of falling.

Walking poles are **adjusted to your height**. When you stand while holding walking poles, you will stand upright with a straighter posture. For example, a cane provides you with unilateral support or support on only one side of your body. Because of this you might find that you are leaning more towards one side when using a cane. With walking poles, you will have **bilateral support or support on both sides of your body**¹³. As a result, you may not lean as much to one side and instead feel more centred.

The feet on the walking poles are also important for stability. You may find walking poles with different types of feet. There are three main types: carbide steel tip, boot-shaped tip, and bell-shaped tip.

Walking poles will have a carbide steel tip hidden underneath the feet.



Carbide Steel Tip



Boot-Shaped Tip



Bell-Shaped Tip

How walking poles may help my balance (continued):



Carbide Steel Tip	
Pros	Cons
<p>Used on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sandy areas, such as beaches• Snowy areas, during the winter• When hiking on trails / on uneven grassy areas (like a sports field)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not recommended for use on hard surface as it causes more vibration and discomfort¹²• If you need more stability and are in the rehabilitation stage of your recovery, this tip may not be appropriate for you

How walking poles may help my balance (continued):



Boot-Shaped Tip	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used by avid walkers who feel more stable• Used for fitness walking• Helps to propel (push) you forward when walking¹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have to be replaced as they become more worn down• If you need more stability and are in the rehabilitation stage of your recovery, this tip may not be appropriate for you



Bell-Shaped Tip	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides more stability and balance• Reduces likelihood of falls• Can be used indoors and outdoors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have to be replaced as they become more worn down

If you have **concerns about your balance**, the bell-shaped tip on walking poles is recommended as it provides the user more stability.

References

12. Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. (n.d.). *Types of stroke*. Heart and stroke. <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/stroke/what-is-stroke/types-of-stroke>
13. Shintani, M. (2020). Activator course for rehabilitation and wellness professionals.