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Oftentimes, standing up from a chair feels unbalanced because of poor sitting balance. Our next balance PDF handout goes into even more detail on the following essential exercises for seated balance: Seated marches Alternating arm/leg reaches Head turns Alternating arm/leg lifts Hip rotation Modified swiss ball plank As a Physical Therapist, Ive helped thousands of older adults improve balance with exercises, stretches, and balance-training programs. The big question I hear is: Can my balance improve? The answer is a resounding yes! Your balance can improve whether youre 45, 65, or 95 years old! If youre curious about the balance research that supports this, you can find the references at the bottom of the article. Nothing like science to back up the importance of balance exercises! Stretching Improving your flexibility can result in better balance. Stretches can also help improve posture and lead to better stability and balance. Mobility Training Joint stiffness can lead to poor mobility, which youve probably noticed at times when you get up and down from a chair. Better mobility can lead to improve balance and coordination. Exercises Strengthening the muscles in your legs, core, and arms can lead to significant improvements in your balance. For seniors, I recommend the following 12 balance-improving exercises. If you want to improve your balance with a structured plan, download the 21 Days to Better Balance exercise guide to see what I teach my patients in the clinic. This guide includes daily routines and balance exercises for seniors, with pictures for easy reference. Previously, I provided an option to download a balance PDF handout for all 12 balance exercises pictured in this article. Instead, just bookmark this page and reference it for free! Ive since expanded the Balance Exercises for Seniors handout to incorporate the entire balance program I use in my clinical practice. The best balance exercises include single-leg stance, narrow-stance reaches, 3-way hip kicks, standing marches, mini lunges, lateral stepping, tandem or semi-tandem stance, and heel raises. All of these exercises target important muscles that need to be strong in order to improve your balance. You need to start balance exercises and practice them for a few weeks. It will take time to see improvements maybe even a couple of weeks but its important to be consistent with your training. I assure you, your persistence will pay off; exercises, stretches, and stability training are proven ways to regain balance. Walking can improve balance, but why not take this healthy habit a step further by including a few simple balance exercises? Many people feel unbalanced while walking, so its important to practice basic balance exercises to improve stability. As you age, the number of nerve cells in your vestibular system decreases. 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Below is a list of some standing balance exercises included in my balance exercise PDF. Youll recognize a few of them from this article. Single-leg stance Romberg balance stance Tandem / Semi-tandem stance Hip kicks (side and back) Step-ups Sit-to-stand exercises Marches I consider dynamic balance training to be exercise that involves multiple moving parts. This might include standing on a single leg while reaching up or out with an arm. Dynamic balance exercises are so important because they can improve many day-to-day activities such as dressing, bathing, cooking, and cleaning. Here are some more dynamic balance exercises included in my balance exercise PDF: Step-up with cone taps Reaching from single leg or Romberg stance Lateral step up Half-forward lunge with arm reaches Squat with press up These balance exercise examples are beneficial for people of all ages. But in my experience as a physical therapist working with older adults, these exercises are especially helpful for the elderly population. Why Should Senior Citizens Perform Balance Exercises? Balance exercises reduce the risk of falls in seniors. Thats because balance affects every aspect of daily life, from walking to standing to reaching for shelves in the kitchen. By improving your balance, youll improve your confidence and independence. Although you can perform most balance exercises without equipment, there are products that, when used correctly, can further help your balance. Two common pieces of balance exercise equipment I use include the following: Balance Board Swiss Ball (Stabilization or Stability Ball) Lets look at a few exercises you can do with each of these items. One of the most popular products to improve balance is a balance board. Balance boards are used in therapy clinics to help improve stability and promote flexibility in the calf muscles. For about \$25, you can purchase a balance board on Amazon. Or, make your own balance board if you have the right tools. Here are a few balance board exercises I do with my patients: Front-back rocking Side-to-side rocking Squats on board Single-leg control Isometric squat with ball press Overhead reaching in squat position Medicine ball pass on balance board These exercises can be referred to as swiss, stability, or balance ball exercises. No matter what you call them, stability ball exercises are very effective in improving dynamic balance, core strengthening, and even decreasing aches and pains. Are you wondering, What size stability ball is right for me? In truth, there isa wide range of sizes for balance and stability balls. Measured by diameter, a stability ball ranges from 25 cm for petite users to 75 cm for larger adults. Use the size chart below for a general guideline when purchasing a stability ball: HeightStability Ball SizeLess than 4 6 or 137 cm30 cm4 6 to 5 tall (137 to 152 cm)45 cm5 to 5 6 tall (152 to 167 cm)55 cm5 6 to 6 2 (167 to 188 cm)65 cmOver 6 2 tall (>188 cm)75 cm Here are some of the most common balance exercises I recommend with the stability ball: Seated marches Arm extensions Head turns Alternating arm/leg lifts Hip rotation Modified swiss ball plank As a Physical Therapist, Ive helped thousands of older adults improve balance with exercises, stretches, and balance-training programs. The big question I hear is this: Can my balance improve? The answer is a resounding yes! Your balance can improve whether youre 45, 65, or 95 years old! If youre curious about the balance research that supports this, you can find the references at the bottom of the article. Nothing like science to back up the importance of balance exercises! 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