

# HOW TO PREVENT FALLS

***Better Balance, Independence  
and Energy in 6 Simple Steps***

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**Welcome to How To Prevent Falls**

## ***The Six-Step Balance System™***

The activities presented in this book are powerful yet simple. The goal of the Six-Step Balance System™ is to help you to prevent falls by practicing and repeating the following exercises on a regular basis. You will strengthen your muscles, increase your confidence and develop an overall sense of well-being.

As you begin using the Six-Step Balance System™, you will be amazed at the positive results you will soon discover. You will learn how to reduce your fear of falling and, in the event of a fall, learn how to fall more safely. In addition, you will avoid or lessen the chance of serious injury.

Regardless of your physical condition, or how old or young you are, you can achieve maximum benefits by using the Six-Step Balance System™.

***The activities  
are powerful  
yet simple***

***You'll be  
amazed at how  
quickly you'll  
see results***



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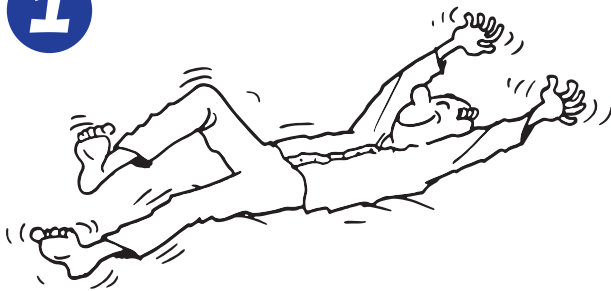
## Stretching in Bed Exercise #1

# Wake Up Call

*A stretching exercise for the whole body.*

**FOR STARTERS:** Remove your pillow from underneath your head.

1



1. Stretch and reach in all directions from your fingertips to your toes!
2. Shake and wiggle, gently waking up your body.
3. Arch your back a little.

4



4. Now make your whole body tense from your face to your toes. Hold for 5 seconds.
5. Relax.

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## Balance Exercise #6

# One for the Books

(continued from previous page)

4. Now, position a book on the floor so that the binding is facing you.

5. Hold on to the back of a straight chair and with the front half of your feet, step up onto the book one foot at a time. Slowly raise both heels until your weight is on the balls of your feet.

6. Hold for a *slow* count of 3. Lower and relax.

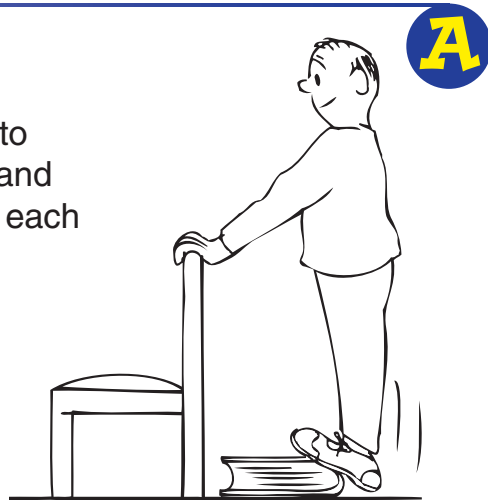
7. Repeat 5 to 10 times.

REPETITIONS: Repeat entire exercise 1 to 3 times.



### ADVANCED VERSION

For an even more advanced version, go back to the phone book and this time when you raise and lower your heels, stop every 2 inches, holding each position for a *slow* count of 3.



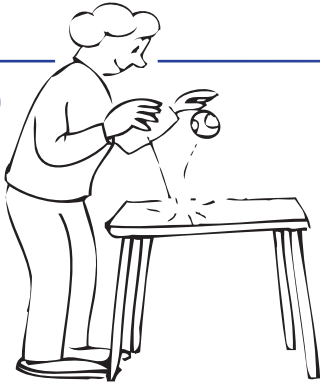
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## Ball Handling Activity #4

### 3 Levels

*Grandchildren love this one.*

**1**



1. Drop and catch the ball on the tabletop 5 times.

**2**



2. Drop and catch the ball on the seat of the kitchen chair 5 times.

**3**



3. Next, drop and catch the ball on the kitchen floor 5 times.

4. Now, perform it in a series: drop and catch on the table 1 time, then drop and catch on the seat of the chair 1 time, and drop and catch on the floor 1 time.

Repeat as often as you wish.

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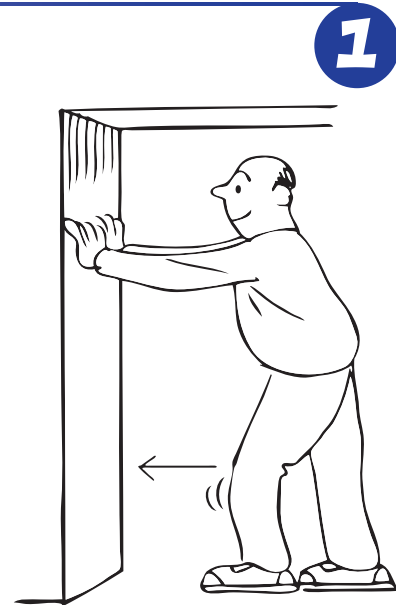
## Walking Warm-Up Exercise #2

### Jamb Session

To avoid leg cramps, drink lots of water.

1. Holding onto a door jamb, place your right foot directly behind the left (with toes of right foot touching heel of left foot and right heel flat on the floor).
2. Now, bend your left knee slightly and feel the stretch in your right leg. Hold for a count of 5.
3. Straighten and return to starting position.
4. Relax, then repeat with other leg, placing your left foot directly behind your right foot. Hold for another count of 5.

Change foot positions a minimum of 2 times. If you suffer from periodic leg cramps, perform this exercise as often as needed.



**DR. BETTY'S**  
**FITNOTE™**

**As you age, you become more susceptible to dehydration for several reasons: Your body's ability to conserve water is reduced, your thirst sense becomes less acute and you're less able to respond to changes in temperature.**<sup>17</sup>

- MayoClinic.com



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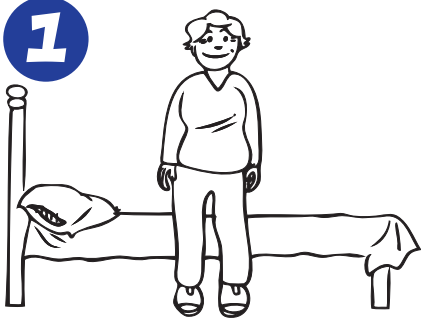
## How To Fall Safely Exercise #2

# The Slump: Into the Bed

*This exercise must be performed daily!*

**FOR STARTERS:** Special Alert!!! Please, **DO NOT** go to bed without performing The Slump!

**1**



1. You should be standing in the center of the side of your bed, with your back toward the bed. Stand tall, feet comfortably apart with the backs of your legs touching the bed and arms hanging loosely at your sides.

**2**



2. Bending at the knees, **SLOWLY** and very loosely collapse into a sitting position on the bed. Slump your shoulders and relax your entire body during this simulated “fall.”

**3**



3. Now, collapse on either your left shoulder and side or right shoulder and side (whichever bedside you started on with your head toward the headboard). Still remaining as loose and limber as possible, bring your knees up slightly toward your chest.

**REPETITIONS:** Every time you go to bed or lie down for a nap.

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Because it is low impact, dancing is generally easier to tolerate for some people who have orthopedic concerns.

Dancing has been shown to increase bone density and help prevent osteoporosis, which is a process not an event. Some 25 million Americans, 80% of them women, have osteoporosis.<sup>20</sup> It is also affecting men in increasing numbers.

A favorite song can stay with you for days and bring a smile long after the last note. Dancing is a great opportunity to get away from the pressures of daily work or other obligations. It can make you walk taller.

In addition, dancing fits easily within one's schedule. As neuro-ophthalmologist Dr. David N. Smith noted, "The problem is when you are busy, it's hard to find time to exercise, and that's what's nice about dancing. It's physical and it's pleasurable."<sup>21</sup>

*Dancing to familiar tunes takes us back to very pleasant times and places*



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## ***Fall-Proofing Your Home: Checklist***

### ***Walkways***

**Yes**

**no**



**Do you use non-skid wax, or no wax at all, on polished floors?**



**Are walkways kept clear of things that could trip you, such as cords, low furniture and toys?**

Tape cords to the floor or wall. Tie up extra cord with a rubber band, or coil it up inside an empty toilet paper tube.



**Do you immediately replace breaks in linoleum, broken floorboards, or flooring that is buckling?**



**Do you clean up spills on floors immediately?**



**Do you arrange your furniture in each room so that a clear and wide walking lane is left open?**

Make wide turns when you are walking around corners.



**Does your favorite chair have arm rests that are long enough to help you get up and sit down?**



**Are your chairs and tables stable enough to support your weight if you lean on them?**



**Are your outdoor stairs and walkways free from cracks, dips and holes?**

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## **Important Resources & Publications**

### **Website Addresses**

#### ***A Tool Kit to Prevent Senior Falls: Brochures***

Designed for fall prevention programs, *A Tool Kit To Prevent Senior Falls* includes fact sheets, graphs and brochures about falls and fall prevention. (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control)

[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/toolkit/toolkit.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/toolkit/toolkit.htm)

#### ***Protecting the Elderly from Falls***

Important articles and information on fall statistics and prevention. Articles on how to easily fall-proof your home. (National Safety Council)

[www.nsc.org/issues/fallstop.htm](http://www.nsc.org/issues/fallstop.htm)

#### ***Falls in Older Adults: Management in Primary Practice***

Used for the evaluation and management of falls. Includes “Get Up and Go Test,” a home safety questionnaire and an evaluation form. Educational materials for patient/family include tips for reducing risk of falls and improving balance. (American Geriatrics Society)

[www.americangeriatrics.org/education/falls.shtml](http://www.americangeriatrics.org/education/falls.shtml)

#### ***Home Design***

Provides help to seniors who wish to stay in their own homes but are facing mobility limitations. This Web page features ideas for making the home more safe and accessible. (AARP)

[www.aarp.org/life/homedesign](http://www.aarp.org/life/homedesign)

#### ***U.S. Administration on Aging***

Search by state to identify state and area agencies on aging.

[www.aoa.gov/eldfam/How\\_To\\_Find/Agencies/Agencies.asp](http://www.aoa.gov/eldfam/How_To_Find/Agencies/Agencies.asp)

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