



# Food Hero for Older Adults

## Focus on Balance



## The Benefits of Balance

Balance is controlled by your brain with information from your eyes, ears, muscles and joints.

Balance helps you do activities of daily living with less dependence on others.

Aim to mix balance with other types of activity on at least 2 days a week. Try dancing, yoga, gardening or sports.

Test your balance: stand on one leg; aim for 30 seconds. Switch legs. Use a chair or nearby wall for safety.

Dehydration, medications and blood pressure can affect balance. Talk to your healthcare provider if you have questions.

1

### Move with ease

Activities such as walking, gardening, dancing and carrying groceries are easier with balance.

2

### Move with confidence

Balance makes it safer to walk on uneven surfaces, walk in the dark and get up from sitting down.

3

### Reduce your risk of falling

Falls are the leading cause of *injury-related deaths* among adults age 65 and older.

4

### Reduce your risk of injury

Balance makes everyday movements safer, resulting in fewer sprains, strains, slips and trips.



### Balance your plate

Making healthy food choices plays a role in balance by providing nutrients that support healthy bones, muscles, vision and blood pressure.

Go to **FoodHero.org** for easy, tasty recipes.



# How to Improve Balance

## Classics Stay Strong

Remember to stay hydrated while moving your body! Keep water near you while exercising.

Foods high in calcium and vitamin D, such as dairy products and canned salmon, work together to support healthy bones and muscles.

Measure your progress! How long can you hold a position before losing balance or getting tired?

If you are just getting started with balance activities, do what you can and build up to more over time.

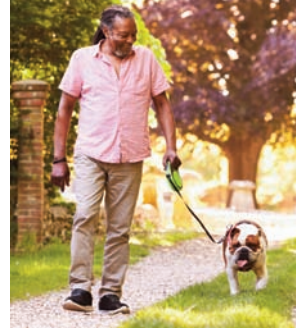
Frozen vegetables can be an easy and low-cost way to add vitamin A to support healthy vision.



1

### Stretch

Stretching keeps your blood flowing and your joints flexible.



2

### Daily Activity

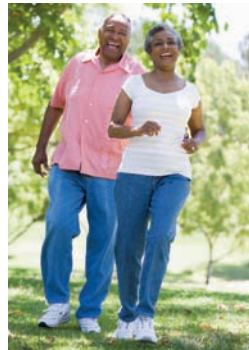
Standing up from sitting, reaching and walking keep your balance muscles strong.



3

### Yoga

Yoga combines stretching, balance and strengthening movements.



4

### Be Physically Active

Sit less and move more each day by doing activities that you enjoy.

**Be Active with Others** Have a friend, neighbor or family member join you during physical activity to make it safe and fun! Your local community center may have activity groups you can join.



### Physical Activity Guidelines for Adults 65+

- Sit less and move more!
- At least **150 minutes a week** of moderate intensity activity such as **brisk walking**.
- At least **2 days a week** of activities that **strengthen muscles**.
- At least **2 days a week** of activities that **improve balance**.

