

### Agenda and Objectives

1. Welcome & outline — review today's agenda
2. Benefits of and barriers to regular exercise
3. Review of exercise homework and planning ahead
4. Review shopping list results
5. Goal setting for mobility
6. Walking sticks
7. Practicing the exercises

#### **BREAK**

8. Moving about safely
9. Safety alarm systems
10. Analyzing fall stories
11. Homework

#### **The main objectives of this session are:**

1. To recognize the benefits of regular exercise, and the barriers.
2. To be able to do each exercise and have a plan for doing them at home.
3. To be able to put on the ankle cuff weights.
4. To learn how to move around safely — getting up from a chair, sitting down, walking, and climbing curbs and stairs.
5. To understand that there are ways of getting up after a fall, recognize the importance of not panicking, and identify a plan that might work if you do fall.



## Getting Out and About – Goal Setting

I am interested in (check which one):

- Crossing a road
- Climbing a curb
- Walking up a slope
- Different surfaces
- Walking outside
- Shopping
- Catching a bus, train, or taxi
- Walking around the house
- Working around the garden
- Trying to use walking sticks outside
- Trying to use a cane
- Getting in/out of a vehicle
- Climbing steps/stairs
- Vision (eye glasses, sunny days, night time)
- Snow/ice
- Medications/alcohol
- What else? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Better balance and  
stronger leg muscles  
will protect against falls.*  
\_\_\_\_\_



### Walking Sticks

Walking sticks can be wooden staffs or ski pole-like devices. They provide added stability when walking, particularly over rough and uneven ground. They are most commonly used when hiking but can be used for walking exercise or even in everyday walking. Walking sticks can help to improve your balance while walking. You can buy them in an outdoor equipment store for \$15 to more than \$100. Some people may need only one stick for balance in walking. Others may need 2 sticks, one in each hand, for even greater stability. If you like the idea of using sticks or poles but don't feel quite secure with them, ask your doctor if you can see a physical therapist to get help with your balance and walking. Don't forget to bring your sticks when you see the therapist!



Switching to a walking stick may not be appropriate if you already use a cane or a walker. Talk to your doctor or physical therapist about this.

### Features of walking sticks

- Single length or telescoping — should be comfortable when held with elbow bent.
- Universal hand grip or grip designed for left- or right-handed use.
- Wrist strap is optional.
- Rubber tip — sometimes removable to reveal a metal tip for more stability on uneven ground.
- Trekking basket — prevents poles from sinking in soft surfaces.
- Shock-absorbing cork or springs inside pole for comfort.

### How to use

- Consult instruction manual to adjust the height.
- If using one stick, use it in the hand opposite your weaker or painful leg.
- If using the stick for balance, use the hand you prefer.
- Advance the stick (or sticks) with each step.
- Plant the stick on the ground in front of your body; do not drag it behind you.
- Coordinate the timing of the stick to simulate a natural arm swing.



### Cane Safety

#### **General principles for using a cane safely:**

- Your cane should be adjusted for your height. The hand grip should be level with your wrist when your arm is at your side.
- Use your cane in the hand opposite to your affected or weaker leg. Bring it forward with your weaker leg.
- Renew the rubber tip of the cane when it becomes worn down. Have a look at the end of your cane now.
- Apply luminous tape so that others can see you when it is dim or dark.

#### **Remember:**

- Walk with your legs a little wider apart to make ramps and slopes easier.
  - On the stairs or curb:
  - Step up first with your stronger leg.
  - Step down with your weaker leg.



### Walker Safety

#### **General principles for using a walker safely:**

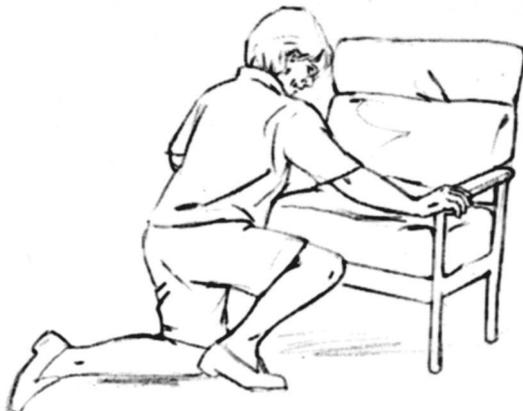
- Your walker should be adjusted for your height. The handgrips should be level with your wrist when your arm is at your side.
- Push up from the chair, not from the walker, when rising to stand. When sitting down, reach for the chair arm rests instead of holding on to the walker.
- Try to not let the walker get too far in front of your body as you are walking. Keep yourself upright and avoid stooping as you walk.
- Renew the rubber tips, glides, or tennis balls on the back legs of the walker when worn. If your walker has wheels, these also need to be replaced every so often.

#### **Remember:**

- When stepping up a curb, put all four legs of the walker up on the curb first. You may want to lock the brakes for added stability. Step up. When stepping down from a curb, put all four legs of the walker down on the ground, lock the brakes if needed, then step down.
- If your walker has brakes, remember to use the brakes to slow the walker down if you feel it is getting away from you, or to slow down on ramps.
- If your walker has a seat, remember to lock the brakes before sitting down or standing up from the walker seat.



## Getting Up After a Fall



1. Don't panic; take your time.
2. Bend both of your knees.
3. Roll onto one side.
4. Push up onto one elbow.
5. Move into a kneeling position on hands and knees.
6. Stop and get your balance.
7. Crawl to a phone on a low table or to a chair.
8. Using both hands, pull yourself up.



### Safety Alarm Systems

#### Help with getting up after a fall

**Personal Emergency Response Systems** — these devices will call for help when you press the button on a pendant or wristband that you wear. Emergency personnel will know your location even if you cannot speak. The devices have a limit on their range and often cannot be used when you are outside of your home. They require you to have a home telephone line and there usually are activation and monthly service fees.



**Accessible telephones** — these are telephones with emergency buttons for people with specific needs. For those with low vision or limited hand dexterity, there are phones with an extra large, bright red emergency button that will dial 911 when pressed. For those who are hearing impaired, there are text phones with emergency buttons. For individuals with memory problems, there are picture phones that can be set up to call pre-programmed numbers.



**911 Cell Phones** — all cell phones, even those without a monthly service contract, are required to be able to make free 911 calls anywhere in the United States. You may be able to get a used cell phone from a friend for free or purchase a refurbished cell phone from a cellular company that will have no contracts, monthly service fees, activation fees, or roaming charges. It will work inside and outside of your home, as long as you are in an area with cell phone coverage. You will need to tell the dispatcher where you are and the type of emergency, as the 911 call center will not know where you are.



**Exercise Log**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Week (please circle the week number — circle one)

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

**Check — if I did my exercises this week**

**Balance Exercises** (daily):

- Monday     Tuesday     Wednesday     Thursday  
 Friday     Saturday     Sunday

**Strength Exercises** (3 times a week — be sure you have one day of rest between strength exercises):

- Monday     Tuesday     Wednesday     Thursday  
 Friday     Saturday     Sunday

