

Agenda and Objectives

1. Welcome & outline — review today's agenda
2. Practice exercises
3. Apple game

Break

4. Home fall hazards
5. Safe clothing
6. Homework

The main objectives of this session are:

1. To learn how to advance exercises as the key to getting stronger and getting better balance.
2. To explore the type and range of fall hazards in and about the home.
3. To be able to recognize hazards in your own home.
4. To figure out ways to reduce home fall hazards.



The Apple Game: Home Fall Hazards

- 1. To answer my phone, I:**
 - a) Go as fast as I can in case they hang up.
 - b) Carefully check that the route to the phone is free of clutter.
 - c) Don't worry if I don't make it — the answering machine will pick it up.

- 2. In cold weather, I place my space heater:**
 - a) In front of my easy chair to keep my feet warm.
 - b) Out of the way of where I walk.
 - c) So both the heater and the cord are out of the way of where I walk.

- 3. In the bedroom, I:**
 - a) Let the linens trail over the edge of the bed.
 - b) Check the floor space and the route where I walk for clutter.
 - c) Leave the cord from the television across the floor.

- 4. To make the steps safer, I:**
 - a) Go down as quickly as possible.
 - b) Improve the lighting at the top and bottom of the stairs.
 - c) Don't leave clutter on the steps.

- 5. So that I don't fall over a cord across the floor, I:**
 - a) Do not use extension cords.
 - b) Rearrange the furniture so the cord is not across the floor.
 - c) Tape or clip the cord to the walls so it is not across the floor.



6. **To make the outside pathways safer, I:**
 - a) Get the bushes cut back to clear the path.
 - b) Never leave my house.
 - c) Get uneven or cracked sidewalks repaired.
7. **When I get up at night, I:**
 - a) Never switch on a night light.
 - b) Leave a flashlight beside the bed.
 - c) Plug in a “photosensitive” light or use an LED plug-in light along the route to the toilet.
8. **To change a light bulb, I:**
 - a) Use a stepladder with a firm base and a safety rail to hold onto.
 - b) Put a dining room chair on the table and climb up.
 - c) Ask someone else to do it.
9. **To make sure pets are not hazardous, I:**
 - a) Get rid of my pets because I might trip over them.
 - b) Shut them up in the back room at times when I’m really busy.
 - c) Make sure the pets are not in the way of the steps when I go out the back door.
10. **My favorite chair:**
 - a) Has a throw rug in front of the chair to protect the carpet.
 - b) Is high enough and has good armrests for standing up easily.
 - c) Is too low and I struggle getting out of it.



11. **To stop me tripping or slipping on a rug, I:**
 - a) Remove all throw rugs.
 - b) Tack or tape down all throw rugs.
 - c) Use a slip-resistant underlay with slippery rugs.

12. **To make the kitchen floor safer, I:**
 - a) Wipe up spills right away.
 - b) Buy a heavy slip-resistant rug.
 - c) Always go around with bare feet so I can feel the slippery patches.

13. **To make it safer on dim days and at night, I:**
 - a) Increase the wattage of the bulbs I buy.
 - b) Wear dark sunglasses.
 - c) Add additional lighting with lamps and night lights.

14. **To make it safer when moving about, I:**
 - a) Pause when going from a dim room to a well-lit area.
 - b) Paint the edges of steps with a contrasting strip.
 - c) Always wear my bifocals when walking around the house.

15. **To move safely from the kitchen to my recliner chair, I:**
 - a) Use photosensitive nightlights or an LED light so the hall is well lit.
 - b) Clear the clutter from the hallway.
 - c) Go as fast as I can so I don't miss my favorite TV show.



16. Reaching to high shelves, I:

- a) Put my most commonly used items within easy reach.
- b) Use my cane to pull down things I can't reach.
- c) Have higher shelves painted a darker color.

17. To make my bath safer, I:

- a) Use a rubber bath mat inside the bath.
- b) Install grab bars.
- c) Paint my bath yellow because this is a safe color.

18. To make my bathroom floor safer, I:

- a) Only use non-slip rugs.
- b) Install and use grab bars.
- c) Use a raised toilet seat.

19. When I don't need my cane, I:

- a) Lay it on the floor near my feet.
- b) Always check to see that it's safely placed so I won't trip over it.
- c) Use a cane holder when I go out.

*With knowledge, you can
be in control of falls.*



Safe clothing is when . . .

- Loose robes are wrapped around the body and loose belts and ties are fastened securely.
- No wide or open pockets stick out and catch door-knobs or furniture.
- Sleeves are not too long, too open, or too wide.
- Hems are not too long and are taken up to above the ankle.

*Think safety when you purchase clothes.
Think safety when you wear dressing
gowns and robes.*



Home Hazard Screening Checklist			
Question	Yes	No	Comments
1. Are there any floors that are slippery when wet or dry?			
2. Are there any obstacles in pathways indoors, on stairs, in areas of access to the home, or on outside pathways?			
3. Is the lighting dim or shadowy in living areas, pathways, access areas, and stairwells?			
4. Are steps and stairs slippery? Do they lack contrast, have worn coverings, or lack a grab rail?			
5. Are floor mats slippery, loose, or curling at the edges?			
6. Are floor coverings worn or loose?			
7. Do you feel unsteady when reaching or climbing, or do you use unstable furniture or equipment when climbing?			



Home Hazard Screening Checklist

Question	Yes	No	Comments
8. Does your footwear fit poorly? Do shoes or slippers have poor fastenings, slippery soles, high heels, or no room for the toes?			
9. Are the outdoor pathways uneven, broken, loose, or mossy?			
10. Are there cords on the floor?			
11. Are there spills on the floor? Is cleaning equipment inaccessible or difficult to use?			
12. Are medications difficult to open, poorly remembered, or have instructions that are difficult to read and understand?			

Home hazard screening checklist (modified from the Westmead Home Safety Assessment, Clemson, 1997). Source: Hill, K., Clemson, L., Vratsidis, F. (1997). Preventing falls – A key to maintaining independence. In: Mackey, H., Nancarrow, S., Editors. (2006). *Enabling Independence – A guide for rehabilitation workers*. London: Blackwell, 182-202.



Products for Slippery Surfaces



Getting rid of moss and mildew on paths and steps

1. Check your local hardware store for mold and mildew removers and follow the package directions.
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Prevent slips on the step edges and ladder steps

1. Check your local home improvement center for step and ladder strips, which are treads you can stick on the step edges to prevent slips and help your eye find the step.
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Anti-slip products for tiles, concrete, and wood

1. Use gripper products for tiled surfaces.
 2. Use non-slip paints for concrete and wood surfaces or steps.
 3. You may want to hire a professional for a commercial application of anti-slip products.
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Prevent slips inside the home

1. Mop up spills right away.
 2. Use double-sided tape to stick down carpet and mats.
 3. Use anti-fungal slip-resistant shower mats.
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Shower and bath non-slip strips

These are available from hardware shops in packets. Pull off the backing and stick to surface.

Shower and bath mats

1. Rubber-suction mats are available at department stores or pharmacies. Should be hung up daily to air and need to be replaced regularly.
 2. Anti-fungal slip-resistant shower mats. Just wipe with soap and water every 6 months.
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For help with slippery surfaces, contact your local handyman service or occupational therapist.



Taking care not to slip when outdoors

1. On the grass, be aware of holes, dips, and rocks.
2. Scan ahead as you walk.
3. Wear sturdy shoes and use the handrails.
4. If you have begun crossing the street with a green light, and the “don’t walk” sign begins to flash, remember that this is just a warning and that you should continue crossing.
5. Be careful in windy weather, or stay inside.



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

