

# Strong Steps: Improve Strength and Balance to Prevent Falls

The following exercises can help improve balance and strength—key to preventing falls.

- **Balance exercises:** Aim for at least 3 days a week (daily is even better).
- **Strength exercises:** Do at least 2 days a week (or every other day).

**Be safe:** Use a sturdy object for support during standing exercises. Stop if you feel pain, dizziness, or shortness of breath, and talk to your provider about possible modifications.

As you get stronger, challenge yourself by:

- Holding positions longer
- Using less support
- Increasing repetitions

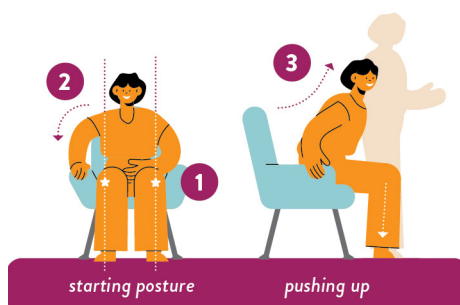
When an exercise becomes easy, make it more difficult to keep improving.

Try adding these balance and strength exercises to your routine today!

## Balance Exercises

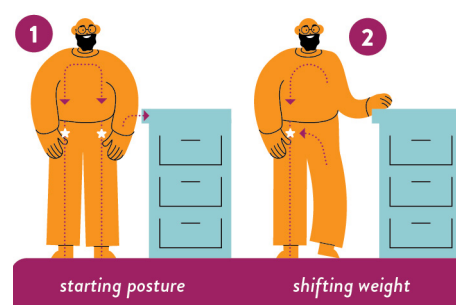
### Sit-to-Stand

p 2



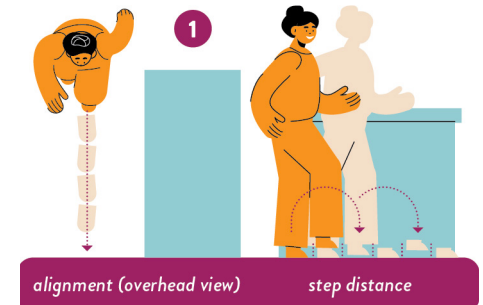
### Weight Shifts

p 3



### Tandem Walk

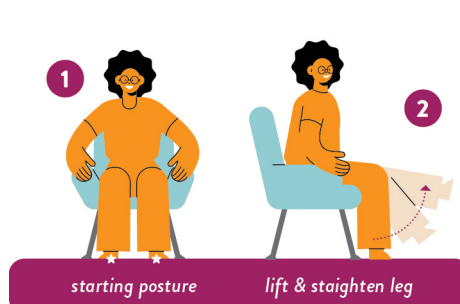
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## Strength Exercises

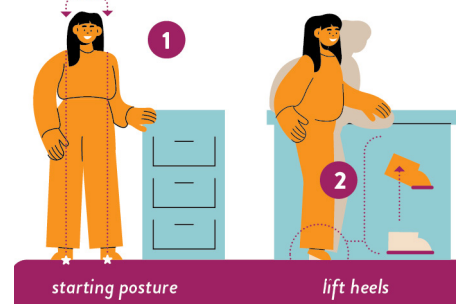
### Leg Lifts

p 5



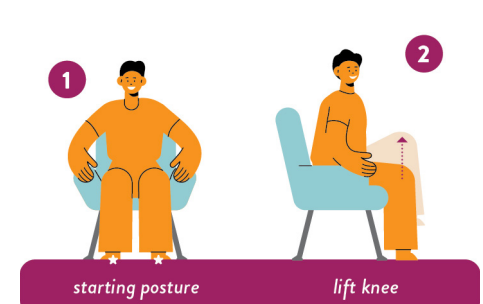
### Heel Raises

p 6



### Hip Marches

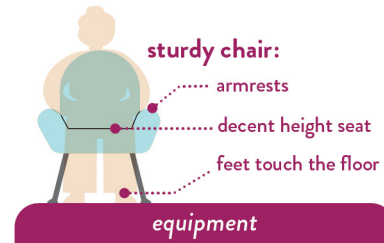
p 7



# Balance Exercise #1

## Sit-to-Stand

*To perform the sit-to-stand exercise, use a sturdy chair without wheels that preferably has armrests. Your feet should touch the floor, and the chair shouldn't be too low.*



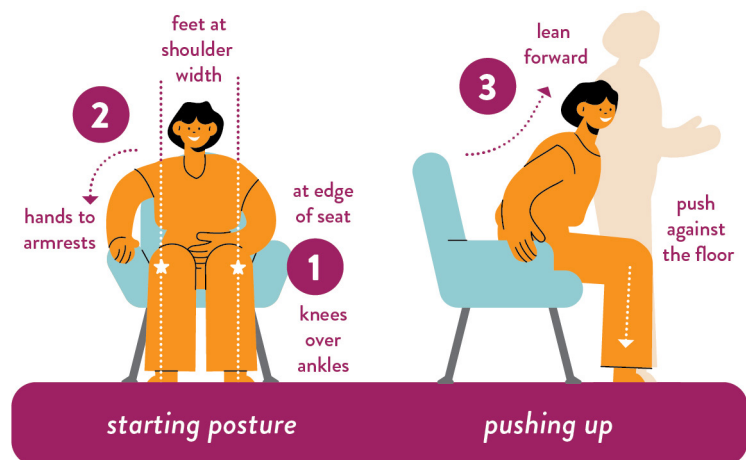
Video of this exercise:

[bit.ly/3CPssPK](https://bit.ly/3CPssPK)



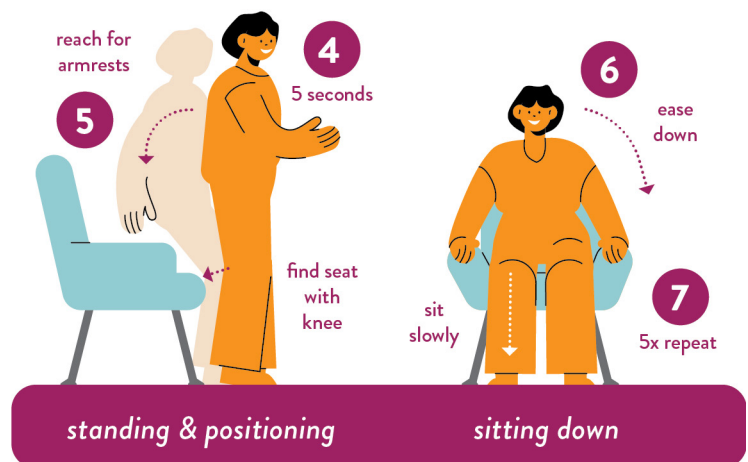
## Standing Up

1. Scoot to the edge of the seat. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart with your ankles right underneath your knees.
2. Place both hands on the armrest.
3. Lean forward and push up off the floor as you stand up tall.



## Sitting Down

4. Remain standing for 5 seconds.
5. Find the chair with the backs of your knees and reach back for the armrests.
6. Sit down slowly.
7. Repeat 5 times.



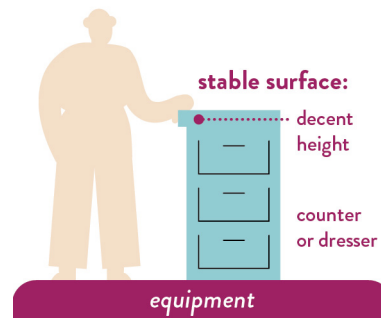
### To make this exercise harder:

- increase the number of times you do it
- only use 1 hand on the armrest
- don't use any hands and cross your arms while you stand

# Balance Exercise #2

## Weight Shifts

*To perform the weight shifts exercise, stand up tall next to something that you can hold on to, like a counter or dresser.*



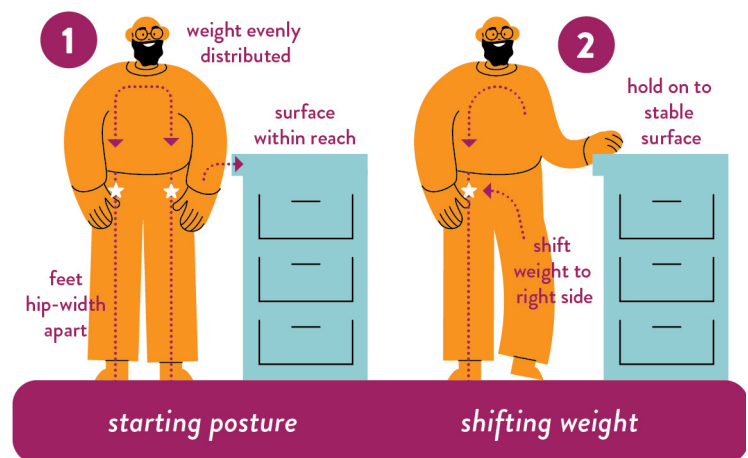
Video of this exercise:

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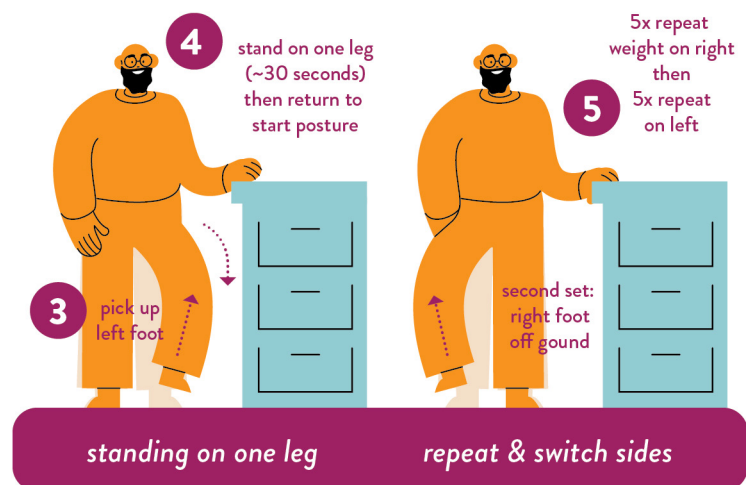
## Distribute Your Weight

1. Stand with your feet hip-width apart, with your weight distributed equally between your legs.
2. Slowly shift your weight over to the right side, while holding on with one hand.



## Stand on One Leg

3. Pick up your foot on your left side.
4. Stand on your right leg for as long as you can (up to 30 seconds), then gently set your left foot down and return to the starting position.
5. Repeat 5 times on each side.



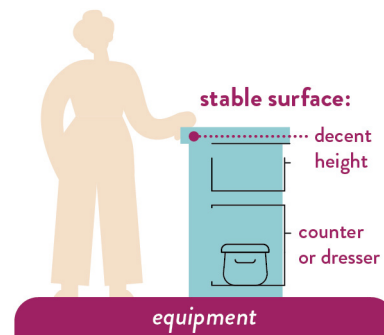
### To make this exercise harder:

- increase the number of times you do it
- increase how long you are standing on one leg
- don't hold on while you do it (but still have something near you for support just in case)

# Balance Exercise #3

## Tandem Walk

*To perform the tandem walk exercise, stand up tall next to something that you can hold on to, like a counter or dresser.*



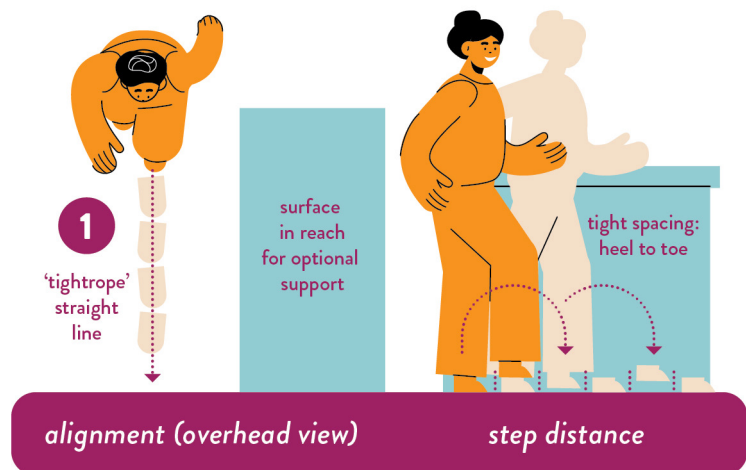
Video of this exercise:

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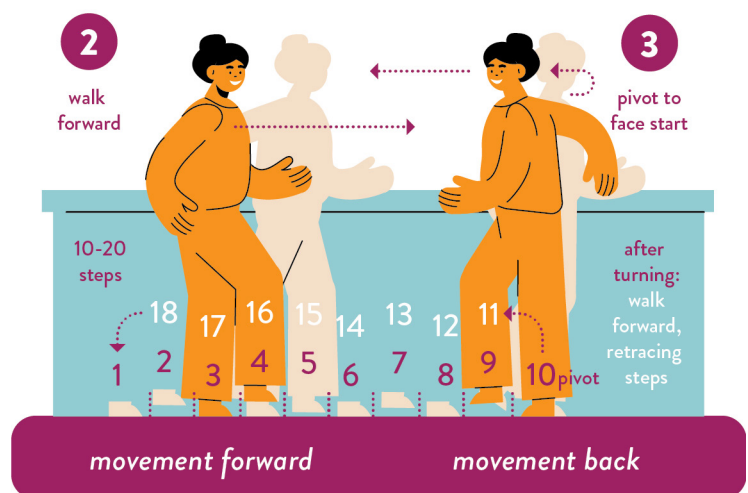
## Establish Direction

1. Walk forward in a straight line, like you are walking on a tightrope, placing one foot in front of the other. Try to get the heel of your front foot to touch the toes on your back foot or get them as close as you can.



## Walk Forward

2. Walk forward for 10-20 steps.
3. Turn around to face your starting position. Take 10-20 steps to return to your starting position. Then turn and repeat as desired.



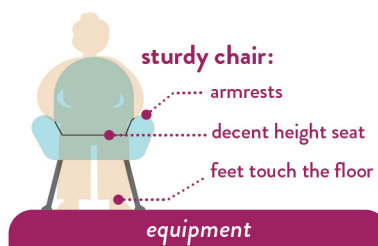
### To make this exercise harder:

- increase the number of times you do it
- increase the number of steps you take
- walk backwards one direction, instead of turning
- don't hold on while you do it (but still have something near you for support just in case)

# Strength Exercise #1

## Leg Lifts

*To perform the leg lifts exercise, use a sturdy chair without wheels that preferably has armrests. Your feet should touch the floor, and the chair shouldn't be too low.*



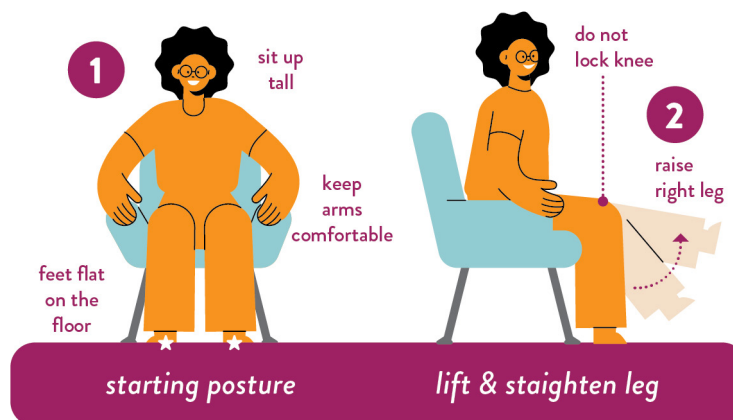
Video of this exercise:

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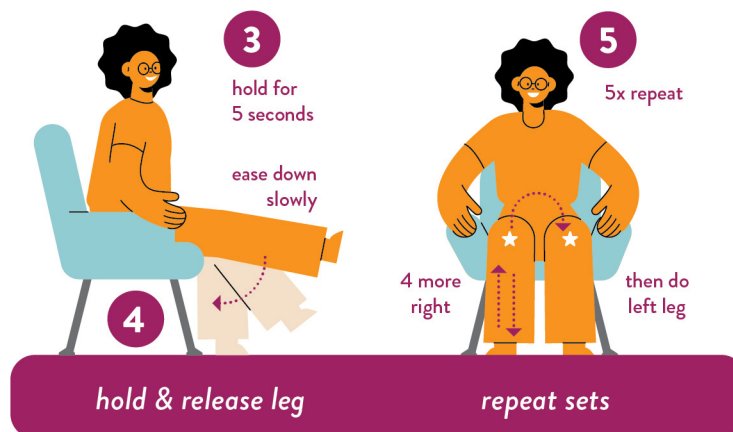
## Lifting Your Leg

1. Sit up tall in a chair with good posture with your feet flat on the floor.
2. Lift your right leg and straighten your knee slowly, as high as it will comfortably go without locking the knee.



## Lowering Your Leg

3. Hold your leg up for 5 seconds.
4. Lower your leg slowly.
5. Repeat 5 times on each side.



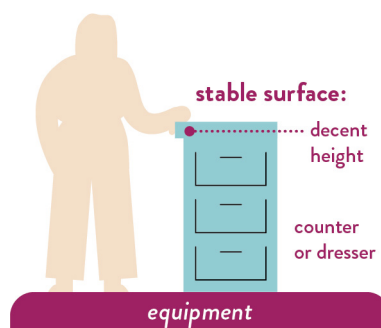
### To make this exercise harder:

- increase the number of times you do it
- try lifting your leg higher (without causing pain)

# Strength Exercise #2

## Heel Raises

*To perform the heel raises exercise, stand up tall next to something that you can hold on to, like a counter or dresser.*



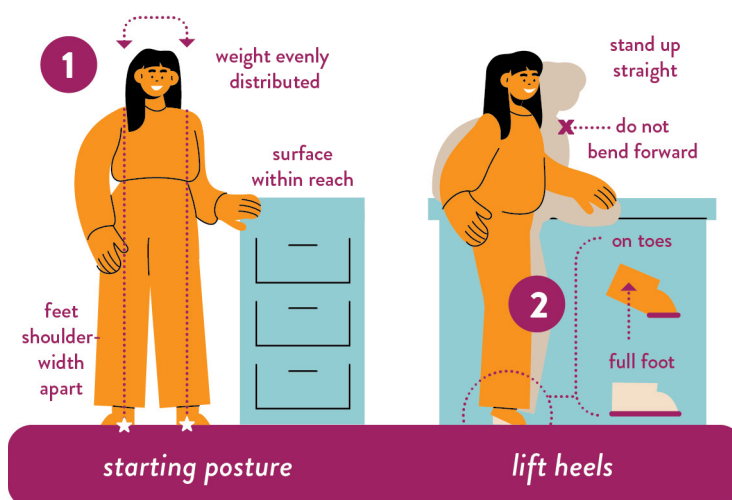
Video of this exercise:

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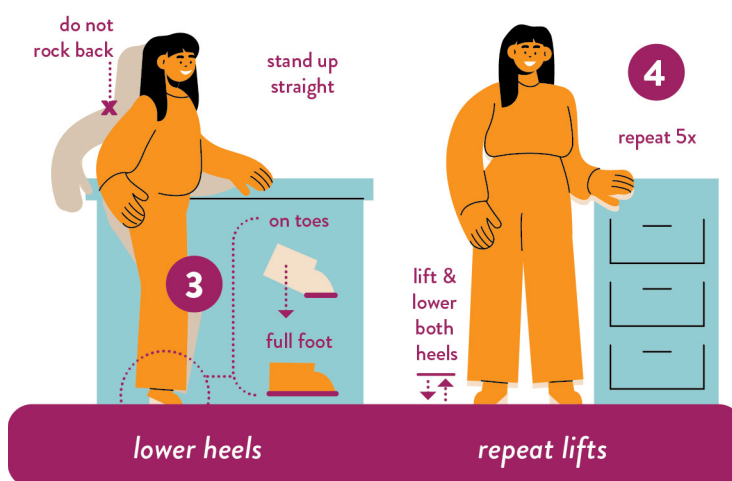
## Raising Your Heels

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, with your weight distributed equally between your legs.
2. Slowly shift your weight to your toes and come up on your tiptoes with your heels off the ground (without rocking forward). Keep legs straight.



## Lowering Your Heels

3. Slowly lower your heels back to the ground (without rocking backwards). Keep legs straight.
4. Repeat 5 times.



### To make this exercise harder:

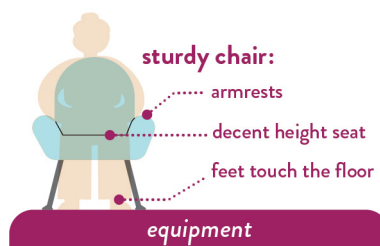
- increase the number of times you do it
- hold the raised position for 5-20 seconds
- don't hold on while you do it (but still have something near you for support just in case)



# Strength Exercise #3

## Hip Marches

*To perform the hip marches exercise, use a sturdy chair without wheels that preferably has armrests. Your feet should touch the floor, and the chair shouldn't be too low.*



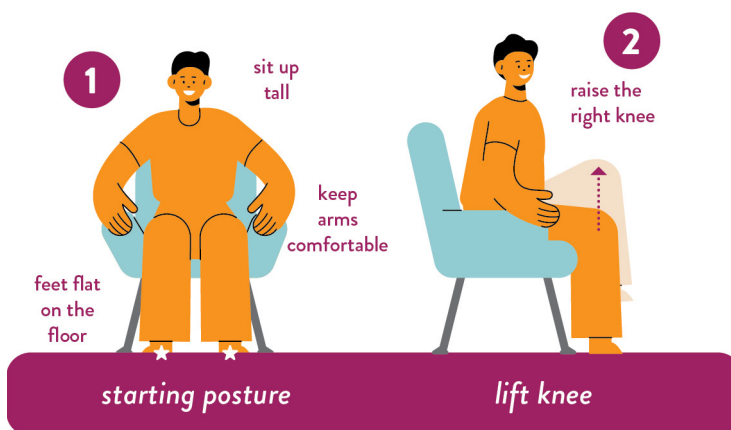
Video of this exercise:

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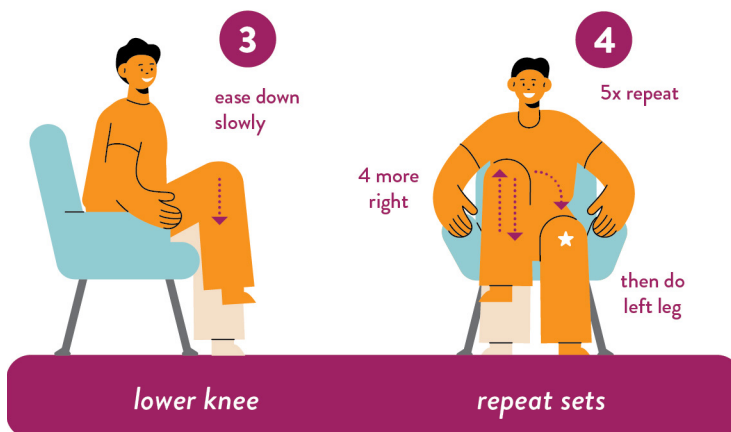
## Lifting Your Knee

1. Sit up tall in a chair with good posture with your feet flat on the floor. Your hands can rest at your sides, or wherever they are comfortable.
2. Lift your right knee as high as it will comfortably go, as if you were marching in place.



## Lowering Your Knee

3. Lower your knee slowly.
4. Repeat 5 times on each side.



### To make this exercise harder:

- increase the number of times you do it
- try lifting your leg higher (without causing pain)
- hold knee in raised position for 2 seconds