

Relieve Your Fears of Falling with Exercise!

Balance exercises can help you improve your stability and confidence at any age, but older adults need to pay particularly close attention to maintaining their balance. According to the [National Council on Aging \(NCOA\)](#), falls are the leading cause of both fatal and non-fatal injuries for older adults. Falls threaten senior's safety and independence, and generate enormous economic and personal costs. However, many falls are preventable.

If you are reading this newsletter, you most likely have access to a **Live 2 B Healthy®** senior fitness program in your community – which is GREAT news if you are interested in improving your balance! **Live 2 B Healthy®** understands the importance of increasing your balance health, and our trainers make positive efforts to include a variety of balance-enhancing routines into every class session. These balance maneuvers aren't always obvious to the casual observer - but, ask any regular class attendee if they have noticed an improvement in their balance since they began attending class and you will almost always hear a very positive reaction.

Many people think that balance means standing on one leg, but, in reality, almost everything you do takes balance. Just reaching your hands up above your head to get an item off of a high shelf involves balance. For that matter, sitting up straight in your chair involves balance. All balance exercises concentrate on improving your core muscle strength – that is, the muscles around your torso (think sit-ups and lateral arm raises). Balance can also be enhanced by improved flexibility, as we are less likely to fall if we are flexible enough to catch ourselves when we slip. Stiff muscles make it more difficult to react quickly enough to move to recover from a slip.

Yoga or tai chi are also excellent options for improving balance. Both practices teach the importance of mindfulness and body awareness, which also help improve balance. Often falls are the result of distractions in the environment – sudden movements noticed out of the corner of the eye that distract our attention just long enough to mis-calculate a step. Any exercise that requires you to devote your full attention to the task at hand helps to develop a stronger

sense of your “head being in the same place as your feet”. Taking the time to fully concentrate on the task immediately at-hand will result in less rushing through movements and more mindfulness while performing complicated tasks requiring balance – such as climbing stairs or keeping your footing on uneven surfaces.



Beatrice Bartz has been attending **Live 2 B Healthy®** classes at **The Tropics Mobile Home Park** in Union City, CA for a little over a year.

She can now stand on one foot for 6 seconds unaided. When Beatrice won the **Most Improved Balance** award in a recent class, she was thrilled: *“That is perfect! That is the main reason I started coming to these classes - to improve my balance and walking. When I started coming to L2BH classes, I had been unable to walk or stand. I have been very happy with this Reprogram because it has improved my balance and walking so much. I think it is a great program!”*

To locate FREE local senior fitness classes in your area, please visit:

<https://franchise.live2bhealthy.com/class-schedule/>

Enter your zip code to find locations near you.