

[IMAGE]

## Find Your Balance

According to the National Institutes of Health, broken hips account for up to 300,000 hospital admissions per year, many of which are directly attributable to falling. Balance is key throughout life, but particularly when you're older because it's more difficult to recover. Here are three NIH-recommended exercises to help improve your balance; to learn more, visit [www.nihseniorhealth.gov](http://www.nihseniorhealth.gov).

### Side Leg Raises:

Stand behind a table or chair, holding it for balance, and slowly lift one leg to the side (6-12 inches), keeping your back and both of your legs straight. Hold, lower, and repeat with other leg. Do 8-15 reps per side.

### Heel-to-Toe Walk:

Lady balancing - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Position the heel of one of your feet in front of the toes of your opposite foot each time you take a step. Your heel and toes should touch or almost touch. This can be a little tricky, so start slow and avoid close confines.

### One-Foot Stand:

As the name of this exercise suggests, stand on one foot for as long as you can without relying on any support. You should be prepared to lean, wobble or fall back to two feet at any time. Repeat while standing on the other foot. Record your times for each side and track improvement.

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