

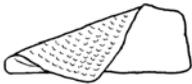
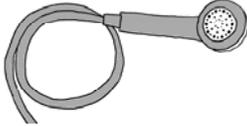
Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Adaptive Equipment for Bathing and Showering

Item	Picture	Where to Purchase
<input type="checkbox"/> Bath transfer bench, adjustable		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bath seat, adjustable		
<input type="checkbox"/> Shower seat, adjustable		
<input type="checkbox"/> Round shower stool, adjustable		
<input type="checkbox"/> Rotating shower stool		
<input type="checkbox"/> Grab bars		
<input type="checkbox"/> Clamp-on tub rail		

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

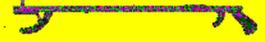
Adaptive Equipment for Bathing and Showering

Item	Picture	Where to Purchase
<input type="checkbox"/> Suction-cup non slip bath mat		
<input type="checkbox"/> Handheld shower spray with wall mount holder and on/off button on sprayer		
<input type="checkbox"/> Long handled brush		

The pictures are representational, different styles may be available.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Adaptive Equipment for Dressing

Item	Picture	Where to Purchase
<input type="checkbox"/> Dressing stick		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dressing stick		
<input type="checkbox"/> Flexible sock aid		
<input type="checkbox"/> Hard sock aid		
<input type="checkbox"/> Reacher		
<input type="checkbox"/> Buttonhook		
<input type="checkbox"/> Long shoe horn		
<input type="checkbox"/> Elastic shoelaces		
<input type="checkbox"/> Velcro closures for shoes and clothes		

The pictures are representational, different styles may be available.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Adaptive Equipment for Toileting

Item	Picture	Where to Purchase
<input type="checkbox"/> Moist flushable wipes		
<input type="checkbox"/> Toileting aid		
<input type="checkbox"/> Toilet safety frame		
<input type="checkbox"/> Toilet seat elevator, available in round or elongated		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bedside commode		
<input type="checkbox"/> Raised toilet seat with arms		
<input type="checkbox"/> Female urinal		

The pictures are representational, different styles may be available.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Cardiac Precautions for Exercise

If one of the following is present, stop therapy and contact the physician

- SOB, chest pain, nausea and vomiting, diaphoresis (sweating), dizziness
- Staggering gait, ataxia
- Confusion or blank stare in response to questions
- Severe hypertension (systolic BP > 165, diastolic BP > 110)
- Severe and persistent hypotension (BP < 90, check parameters with MD)
- Resting heart rate > 130 bpm, < 40 bpm
- Inappropriate heart rate or BP changes with self-care activities (increase in HR of more than 20 BPM, or increase or decrease in systolic BP of more than 20 mmHg)
- Oxygen sat < 85%

Exercise is contraindicated for the following

- Uncontrolled atrial or ventricular arrhythmias
- Second or third degree heart block
- Recent embolism, either systemic or pulmonary
- Resting HR greater than 120 with a recent MI
- Resting HR greater than 130 with recent bypass surgery, cardiomyopathy, CHF, or valve surgery
- Thrombophlebitis
- Gross cardiac enlargement
- Resting or unstable angina
- Dissecting aneurysm
- Fever greater than 100° F / 37.5° C
- Primary, active pericarditis
- Severe aortic stenosis
- Uncontrolled CHF or HTN
- Uncontrolled diabetes mellitus (BS > 250 mg/dL)

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Coordinating Your Breathing with Activities

Coordinating pursed lip breathing with activities will conserve energy.

Image your chest is like a fireplace bellows. As the bellows are compressed, the air is pushed out. When the bellows are expanded, the air is brought in.

When you expand your body, breathe in through your nose.

Reaching up to comb the top of your hair.

Breathe in through your nose as you reach your arm up. Breathe evenly as you comb your hair. Breathe out through pursed lips as you return your arm down.

Reaching up to get an item from the cabinet or a shirt from the closet.

Breathe in through your nose as you reach up, and breathe out through pursed lips as you bring the item down.

Putting on a shirt over your head.

Breathe in through your nose as you place the shirt over your head. Breathe out through pursed lips as you pull the garment down.

When you compress your body, breathe out through pursed lips.

Bending over to tie your shoes.

Breathe out through pursed lips as you bend down; breathe evenly as you tie the shoelaces; then breathe in through your nose as you sit up.

Bending to the side while seated to pick up the newspaper.

Breathe out through pursed lips as you bend sideways. Breathe in through your nose as you sit up.

Twisting around to clean after using the bathroom.

Breathe out through pursed lips as you twist; then breathe in through your nose as you return forward.

The exception to these rules is when you are lifting or pushing something heavy. Then you would blow out on exertion, but lifting or pushing heavy items expends a lot of energy and should be avoided.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Daily Foot Care and Foot Safety

Foot Hygiene

Inspect your feet every day. Look at the top and bottom, sides and heels, toes and toenails and between each toe. Use a hand mirror to help you see all areas. If you cannot see to do this yourself, have another person inspect your feet. Check for redness, blisters, cuts, sores, cracks, change in temperature, swelling or loss of feeling. **If you notice any of these changes, contact your doctor.**

Wash all parts of your feet every day with a mild soap and warm water. Check the water temperature with your elbow. Use a soft white washcloth to clean your feet. Be sure to rinse all the soap off, because it can build up and dry out the skin.

Dry your feet with a soft towel by patting; dry thoroughly between the toes.

Choose a lotion that has lanolin but is alcohol-free. Use it on your feet and legs daily, but do not use it between your toes. Use un-medicated powder to keep the feet dry.

Make regular appointments to see a podiatrist for nail care, corns or calluses.

Never cut the cuticle, open blisters or try to free ingrown toenails.

Ask your physician to examine your feet at each visit.

Shoes

Wear shoes that fit properly and allow plenty of room for your toes. Avoid pointed or open-toed shoes and sandals. Do not use inserts or pads in your shoes without medical advice.

New shoes should be broken in gradually to minimize the risk of developing blisters and ulcers. Start by wearing them for 1 hour on the first day, increasing by 1 hour each day until you build up to a full day.

Inspect your shoes daily for cracks in the soles, wrinkles in the lining or objects inside your shoes that may injure your feet.

Take rest periods during the day when you can remove your shoes and elevate your legs.

Purchase shoes in the afternoon, when your feet are their largest due to swelling.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Daily Foot Care and Foot Safety

Socks

Do not wear shoes without socks.

Select seamless well fitting socks that wick away moisture. Change your socks everyday.

Avoid constricting socks, garters or girdles.

Avoid socks that have holes, mends, seams or edges.

Protect Your Feet

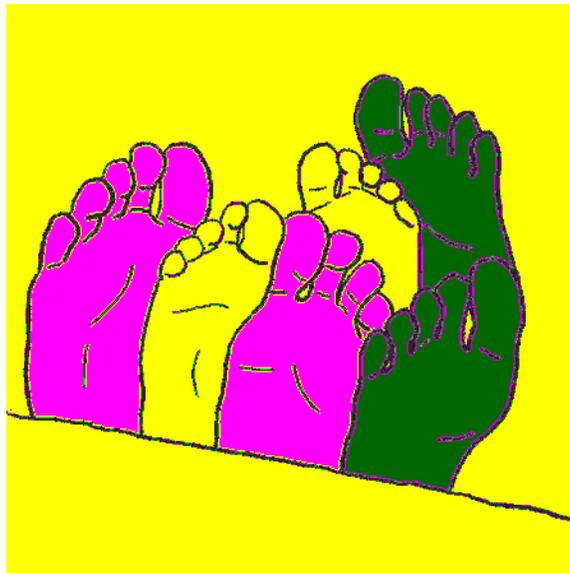
Never step into a tub or shower without checking the water temperature first.

Never walk barefooted at home or outside. Never walk on hot surfaces such as the beach or at swimming pools.

Never use hot water bottles, hot compresses, heating pads or lamps near your feet.

Loosen the blankets at the bottom of the bed to reduce pressure on your toes.

See your podiatrist at least once a year. More frequently if you develop problems or if your doctor recommends them.



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Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Deep Breathing Exercise

Deep breathing is combining pursed lip breathing and diaphragmatic breathing.

This exercise will help maintain the normal movement of your chest, making it easier for your lungs to expand. Continue these deep-breathing exercises indefinitely.

Perform this exercise 5-6 times a day. Take 5-6 deep breathes each session.

Instructions:

1. Sit in a comfortable position with your back supported or resting comfortably in bed in a semi-reclined position.
2. Place one hand on your stomach above the naval. Place your other hand on your chest.
3. Locate your diaphragm with a quick "sniff" or a few short pants.
4. Exhale slowly through pursed lips and gently push in with the hand that is on the stomach. The hand on your chest should be still.
5. Inhale deeply through your nose and allow the hand on your stomach to rise with the expanding diaphragm. The hand on your chest should be still.



Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Diaphragmatic Breathing

The diaphragm is a flat square muscle that divides your chest and abdominal cavities. The goal of diaphragmatic breathing is to regain the mobility and strength of your diaphragm muscle. Many patients use their upper chest muscles to breathe. These muscles are ineffective and when the diaphragm is not used, it becomes weaker.

Instructions:

1. Sit in a comfortable position with your back supported or rest comfortably in bed in a semi-reclined position. Loosen your belt and waist button. Do not rest your head instead lean it forward. This will promote the use of the diaphragm and decrease the use of the upper chest muscles. Relax your neck and shoulder muscles by slowly rolling your shoulders
2. Place one hand on your stomach above the naval. Place your other hand on your chest.
3. Using the hand on your stomach. Locate your diaphragm with a quick "sniff" or a few short pants.
4. Exhale slowly and gently push in with the hand that is on the stomach. The hand on your chest should be still.
5. Inhale deeply and allow the hand on your stomach to rise with the expanding diaphragm. The hand on your chest should be still.
6. Practice your breathing during three 10-minute sessions, daily. When you become comfortable with this technique begin to use it all the time.
7. If you become dizzy or lightheaded, stop the exercise. When your symptoms resolve continue this technique but slow your breathing.



Double voiding

Community and Extended Care Services. Adult Health Program Continence Advisory Service.

What is voiding?

Voiding is the term for passing of urine.

What is double voiding?

Double voiding is a technique that may assist the bladder to empty more effectively when urine is left in the bladder. It involves passing urine more than once each time that you go to the toilet. This makes sure that the bladder is completely empty.

Why double void?

If the bladder is not emptied completely it may cause some medical problems.

For example:

- if urine is continually left in the bladder it can become stretched over time, which may cause further problems with incontinence
- if urine is left in the bladder it may allow the build up of bacteria which may cause urine infection.

Double voiding is a simple, recommended procedure to avoid bladder infections.

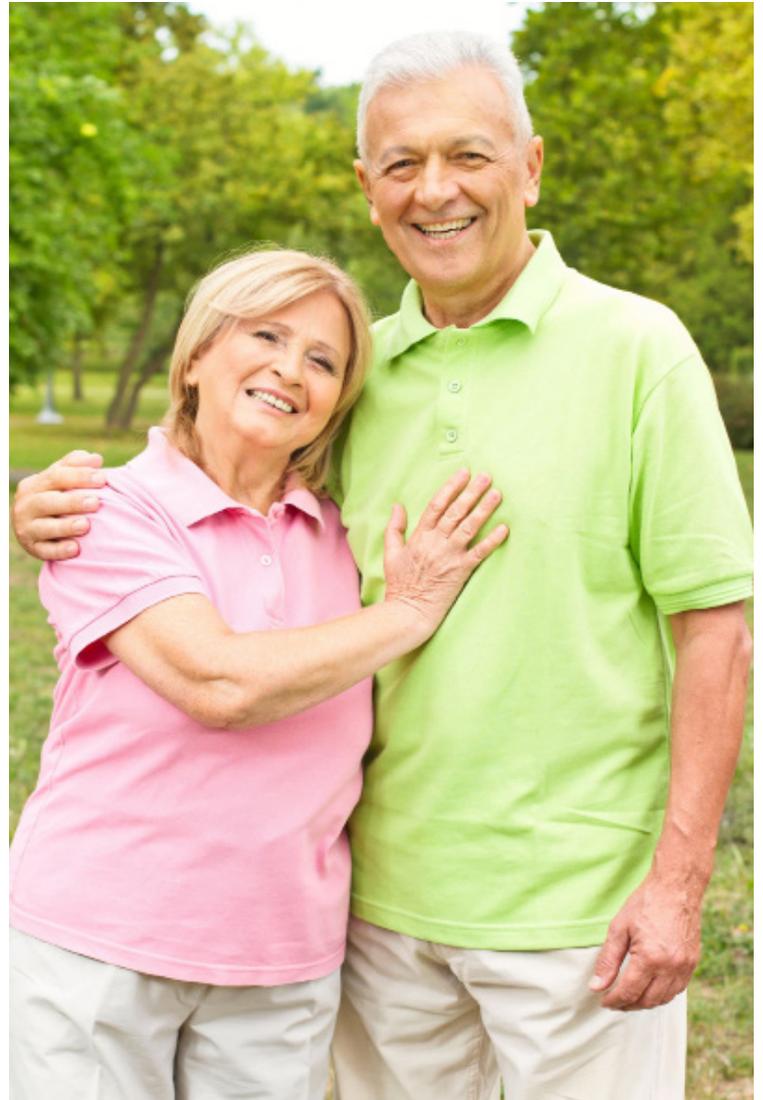
How does double voiding work?

It works by stimulating the bladder muscle to contract and empty a second time.

What do you have to do?

Here you will find a number of tips which can be used to help you empty your bladder. The health professional who provides you with this pamphlet will explain these double voiding techniques to you.

- always sit comfortably on the toilet with your feet supported
- males who stand to urinate may find it useful to then sit on the toilet



Standard 2
Partnering with Consumers



Standard 12
Provision of Care



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- leaning forward and rocking from side-to-side may help (only perform this double voiding technique if you are able to support yourself safely)
- tapping over the bladder with two fingers may stimulate the bladder to contract and empty
- listening to running water
- stroking your inner thighs, abdomen or lower back
- pouring a jug of warm water over the pubic region
- once you have finished passing urine, count to 10 slowly, or have a walk around the bathroom then sit on the toilet again to try and pass urine
- never strain to pass urine
- avoid constipation.

It is important to note that you may need to try several of these double voiding techniques to find the one that works for you. If these techniques do not help, please seek further medical advice.

Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) and incontinence

UTIs are preventable, but they are one of the leading causes of urinary incontinence. Recurring infections may lead to scarring of the bladder. This increases the risk of permanent urinary incontinence.

Symptomatic and recurrent UTIs should always be reported to a doctor, as treatment with antibiotics is generally required.

Best position for emptying bladder

- sit with feet apart and well supported
- have knees apart and over feet
- lean forward and rest on thighs or knees
- straighten lower spine in forward facing position.



Remember

If you would like to confidentially discuss any incontinence issues you may be experiencing, you can contact:

The National Continence Helpline

1800 330 066 (freecall)

Monday to Friday 8.00am to 8.00pm

Nambour Community Health Centre

Centenary Square, Nambour QLD

4560

Ph: 5202 8770

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Eating Techniques

Eating Techniques

Ask a sighted person to describe the location of the food on the plate using a clock method.

Use the "clock" method to locate items on the tabletop.

Slide hands across table to locate dishes.

Use a piece of bread or a commercially available plate guard as a "pusher".

To pour liquids, put one finger in the container and pour until the liquid reaches it.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Energy Conservation

Pace Yourself

1. Allow yourself enough time to complete a task without having to rush.
2. Spread heavy and light tasks throughout the day and week.
3. Don't schedule too many activities in one day.

Plan Ahead and Be Organized

1. Gather all items you will need before you start a task.
2. Keep items organized and within easy reach.

Simplify Your Tasks and Set Realistic Goals

1. Prioritize what activities are most important to you.
2. Don't think you have to do things the same way you've always done them.
3. Ask for help. Divide tasks among family and friends.
4. Use adaptive equipment when needed.
5. Use appliances to do the work for you.

Avoid Fatigue

1. Don't wait until you are tired before you stop and rest.
2. Plan rest periods throughout the day, 5-10 minutes out of every hour.
3. Sit when possible.
4. Use pursed lip breathing
5. Do not plan activities right after a meal. Rest 20 to 30 minutes after each meal.
6. Get a good night's sleep and elevate your head when sleeping.

Avoid Unnecessary Motion

1. Limit the need to bend, reach and twist.
2. Minimize arm movements especially above your shoulder level.
3. Keep your elbows low and close to your body.
4. Support elbows on a surface when working in one place.

Use Good Posture

1. Sit and stand straight.
2. Proper body alignment balances muscles and decreases stress.
3. A stooped posture makes breathing more difficult.

Use Good Body Mechanics

1. Stand close to the object to be moved.
2. Push or pull rather than lift. Slide objects along the counter.
3. Avoid bending, reaching and twisting.
4. Carry items close to the body, keeping your back straight.
5. If you must lift, use your legs muscles rather than your back.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Energy Conservation with Meal and Home Management

Remember to use your pursed lip breathing.
Pace yourself and rest frequently.

Cooking

1. Gather all necessary items before beginning.
2. Prepare part of the meal ahead of time.
3. Sit to prepare the vegetables, mix ingredients and wash dishes.
4. Use recipes that require short preparation time and little effort.

After Meal Clean-up

1. Rest after meals before starting to clean up.
2. Let dishes soak to eliminate scrubbing.
3. Let your dishes air dry.
4. Eat on paper plates several times a week.
5. Use the garbage disposal. Empty trash frequently or have a family member do it.

Marketing and Meal Planning

1. Organize your shopping list to correspond with the layout of the grocery store.
2. Shop when the store is not busy.
3. Get help reaching for high and low items and for carrying heavy items.
4. Use the store's electric scooter to shop.
5. Ask the clerk to bag the groceries lightly and bag cold and frozen food together.
6. Make several trips to bring the groceries into the house, take the cold and frozen foods first, and after you have rested, return for the remainder.

Laundry

1. Sit to iron, sort clothes, pre-treat stains and fold laundry.
2. Transfer wet clothes into dryer a few items at a time.
3. Get help to fold large items such as sheets.

Housework

1. Divide up each room into smaller areas and tackle these sections.
2. Break up chores over the whole week, doing a little each day.
3. Sit to dust.
4. Use long handled dusters and cleaning attachments.
5. Use a mop to clean up spills instead of bending over.
6. Pick up items off the floor using a reacher.
7. Use paper towels to eliminate extra laundry.

Bed making

1. Make half the bed while you are still lying in it. Pull the top sheet and blanket up on one side and smooth out. Exit from the unmade side, which is easy to finish.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Energy Conservation with Self Care Activities

Remember to use your pursed lip breathing.
Pace yourself and rest frequently.

Eating

1. Eat slowly and completely chew your food.
2. Eat six small meals a day instead of three big meals. This will cut down on the energy you need to chew and digest your food.
3. Avoid gas-forming foods that bloat your abdomen and make it more difficult to breathe, such as peas, melons, turnips, onions, cauliflower, apples, corn, broccoli, cucumbers, cabbage, beans, and Brussels sprouts.

Grooming

1. Sit to shave, comb your hair and brush your teeth.
2. Support your elbows on the counter while grooming or shaving.
3. Use an electric toothbrush and an electric razor.
4. Wash your hair in the shower. Keep your elbows low and your chin tucked.
5. Avoid aerosols and strong scents.

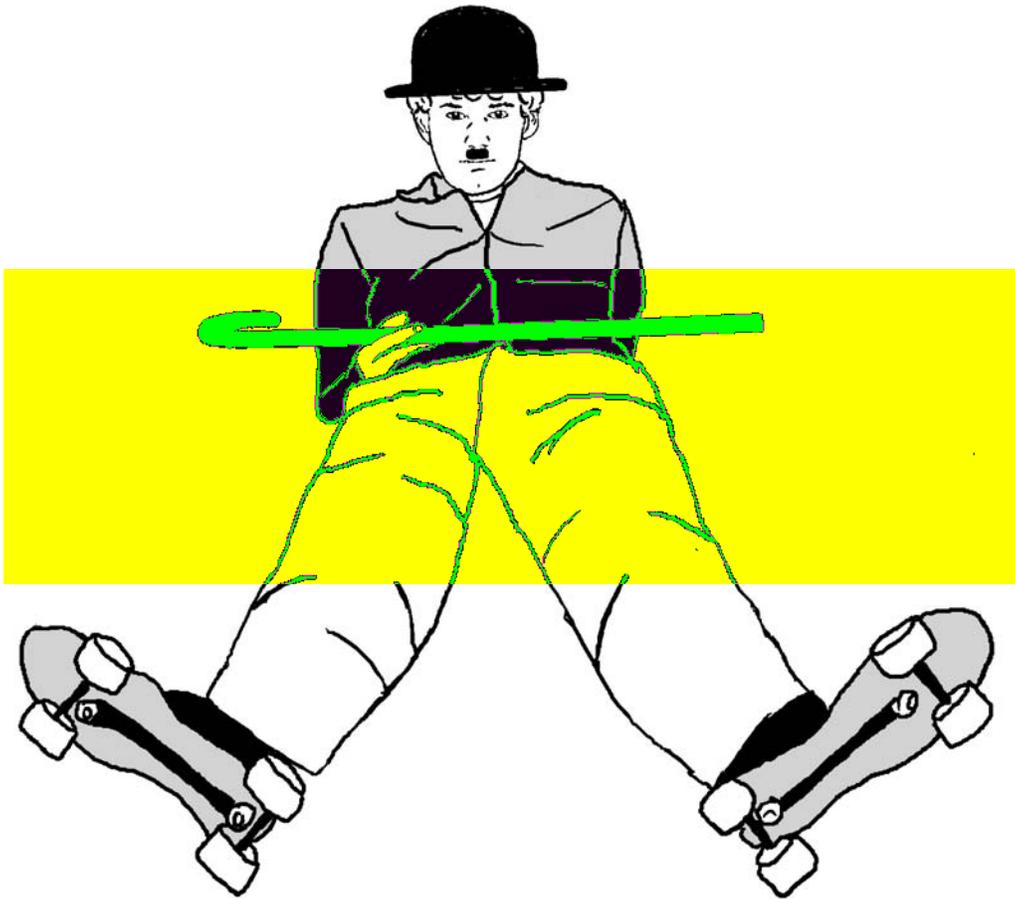
Bathing and Showering

1. If your doctor has prescribed oxygen to be use during exercise, then use it when you take a shower.
2. Make certain your bathroom is well-ventilated.
3. Consider taking your shower in the evening to allow plenty of time.
4. Gather all the necessary items you will need, including your clothes.
5. Sit to undress, bathe, dry and dress. Use a bath chair in your shower.
6. Avoid over reaching. Use a long-handled brush to wash your back and feet. Use a hand-held showerhead to rinse.
7. Use a shower caddy and soap on a rope or place soap in a nylon stocking and tie the stocking to the shower seat or soap dish.
8. Have a towel or robe near by. Consider using hand towels because they are not as heavy. Avoid the task of drying by putting on a terry cloth robe.

Dressing

1. Gather all the necessary items you will need.
2. Sit to dress.
3. Minimize bending by bringing your foot to the opposite knee, use a step stool or use long-handled equipment to put on pants, shoes and socks.
4. Wear easy-to-put-on, comfortable clothes such as slip-on shoes; elastic waistbands and one sized larger shirts
5. Avoid restrictive clothes such as belts, ties, tight socks, girdles and bras. Use suspenders if belts are too restricting.

Don't Let a Fall Get You Down



Ways you can reduce
your risk for falls

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Don't Let a Fall Get You Down

What do I need to know?

A fall is an event in which a person unintentionally lands on the floor or ground in the absence of an over-whelming force, seizure, fainting, or acute stroke. Falls are **not** a normal part of aging. Falls can be prevented. A fall is often a warning sign that something is wrong.

Everyone is at risk for falling. Older and younger people can have falls. It's just that when we are older the chances of an injury are greater.

One out of 3 people over age 65 fall at least once each year. Falls are a serious problem among older people affecting both health and quality of life. Falls may cause physical injury, decreased self-confidence, fear of falling and restriction of activities.

Most falls involve two or more risk factors interacting to cause a fall such as poor balance and a slippery surface. Understanding our risk factors is the first step to reducing falls. Some risk factors include: impaired balance, inactivity, low vision, moving too quickly, unsafe footwear, home hazards, taking 4 or more medications, having chronic health problems and fear of falling.

What can I do to reduce my risk?

This booklet will provide you with information on ten topics associated with falls and the preventative measures you can take to reduce your risk of falling.

1. Risk Factors
2. Keep Your Balance
3. Stay Active
4. Create a Safe Home
5. Be Safe in the Community
6. Feet, Footwear and Clothing
7. Manage Your Health
8. Know Your Medications
9. Consequences of Falling
10. If You Fall

The suggestions provided are not inclusive. You're encouraged you to talk with your doctor and other health professionals to develop a plan specific for your needs.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Risk Factors

What do I need to know?

A fall risk factor is something that increases your risk of having a fall. As the number of risk factors rises, so does the risk of falling.

Some risk factors are fixed such as being over age 75, but a large number of them can be modified. This booklet will give you information on how you can lower your risk.

Check off the risk factors that concern you. Read through this booklet and share what you learn with your family and your doctor. They can help you make the changes necessary to reduce your risk for falling.

- Age is over 75 years
- Low vision
- Arthritis, stroke, Parkinson or CHF
- Takes 4 or more medications
- Takes high-risk medications
- Dizziness
- Balance and walking problems
- Low blood pressure
- A recent illness or admission to hospital
- Cognitive impairment
- Muscle weakness
- Foot problems
- Fear of falling
- Carries items while using the stairs
- Doesn't always use the handrails
- Physically inactive
- Rushes to answer the phone
- Wears clothing that are too long
- Uses a mobility device that is worn or fit improperly
- Wears unsafe footwear
- Climbs on chairs to reach high items
- Rushes to the bathroom
- Unsafe floor coverings
- Poor lighting
- Unsafe furniture
- Slippery surfaces in bathroom
- Lack of handrails on stairs
- Clutter on the floor
- Throw rugs
- Lack of grab bars in the bathroom

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Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Keep Your Balance

Balance is the ability to maintain equilibrium against the force of gravity. Our bodies are constantly making adjustment in order to keep from tipping over.

To have good balance you need 1) your vision so you can see where you are in space. 2) your inner ear so you know where your head is in relation to your body and which way your body is moving 3) your proprioception which are sensors in your skin, joints and muscles that tell you where your body parts are in relation to everything else.

What can I do to protect my vision?

Have your eyesight tested at least once a year, more frequently if an eye condition has been diagnosed. If you notice any changes in your eyesight, make an appointment. Eye diseases such as glaucoma, macular degeneration, cataracts and diabetic retinopathy can cause severe vision loss. If these conditions are diagnosed early, they can be managed to minimize vision loss.

Wear your glasses and keep your glasses clean. If you wear bifocals/reading glasses, remove them before walking, especially when negotiating steps and curbs or walking in unfamiliar surroundings.

Wear a wide brimmed hat and sunglasses when out in the sun. Remember to remove them before going inside.

Give your eyes time to adjust when you move into a darker or much brighter area.

Use good lighting and nightlights in your home.

What can I do to protect my inner ear?

Have your hearing tested every year.

Wear hearing aides if you need them.

Avoid sudden movements especially when rising from a seated or kneeling position.

What can I do to protect my proprioception?

Be active and challenge your balance everyday.

Manage diabetes, as it can cause sensory loss in the feet. Have the sensation of your feet tested every year by a podiatrist.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Stay Active

Research shows that people who are physically active are less likely to fall. In addition, if you do fall, you are less likely to be hurt, and you are better able to get up again. The more you sit, the greater your risk of falling. Muscles weaken; joints stiffen and balance declines. Walking becomes unsteady and you are more likely to fall.

What can I do to stay active?

Talk with your doctor before beginning any new physical activity or exercise program.

Participate in some form of moderately intensive - aerobic activity for at least 30 minutes, on most days.

- The thirty minutes can be broken down into three 10-minute sessions. You may need to start slow with 5 minutes sessions and build up to the full 30 minutes.
- A moderate level of activity noticeably increases your heart rate and breathing rate. You may sweat, but you are still able to carry on a conversation. You can talk, but you can't sing.
- Find something you enjoy, walking, swimming; climbing the stairs; ballroom dancing; water aerobics; bowling; biking; washing the car; video exercise programs; cycling on a stationary bicycle; and community exercise programs.

A well-rounded physical activity program also includes strength training exercises, balance exercises, and stretching.

- Building strength makes it easier to climb stairs, get out of a chair, and get in and out of a car. Also, if you do fall, strong muscles make it less likely that you will get badly hurt. Try to do strengthening exercises 2-3 times a week. Some examples include hand-held weights; resistive bands; yoga; exercise videos; and community exercise programs.
- Balance exercises can be done through out the day. You can stand on one foot or stand with one foot in front of the other. You can do this when you're brushing your teeth, washing the dishes or waiting in line. You can also exercise your balance during regular exercise routines. Some examples include Tai chi; non-contact boxing; dancing; stability ball exercises; Pilates; and Yoga. Try to do some balance exercises for 10-15 minutes, three days a week.
- Stretching each day helps you stay flexible so it is easier to reach, bend, get up and sit down. Stretching can make you feel less stiff and help prevent aches, too. You should stretch after aerobic and strengthening exercises.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Create a Safe Home

What do I need to know?

Your home could put you at risk for a fall. More than 75% of all falls occur in or around the home. The three major problem areas in the home are the steps/stairs, the bathroom and the bedroom.

The most common hazard for falls is tripping over objects on the floor or ground. Other factors include poor lighting, slippery surfaces (floor, tub), lack of grab bars and unsteady furniture.

What can I do to reduce my fall risk?

Conduct a walk-through of your home and property to identify possible problems that may lead to slips, trips or fall. With a few changes, you can decrease your risk of falling. Changes may include:

- Adding support features
 - Grab bars in the bathroom
 - Handrails on the stairs
 - Additional lighting inside and outside
 - Non-slip mats in the tub or shower
- Using adaptive equipment
 - Shower chair for bathing
 - Reacher
 - Bed and chair risers
- Removing hazards from the floor, pathways and stairs
 - Removing throw rugs
 - Moving phone/lamp cords out of pathways
 - Rearranging furniture
 - Removing hazards from sidewalks (leaves, moss, and ice).
 - Repairing holes in sidewalks, wrinkles in carpet
- Moving and doing activities more cautiously
 - Hold onto handrails and grab bars.
 - Don't rush, slow down and pick up your feet
 - Avoid climbing on chair or unsteady stepladders.
 - Hold on to something steady when reaching for the floor
 - Turn on the lights before entering a room, use nightlights.
 - Remove your reading glasses before walking or using the stairs.
 - Don't leave items in the floor (shoes, newspaper, books, blankets, pillows, phone cords, bed spreads, dirty clothes, pet toys, trash).

Home safety self-assessment should be ongoing and particularly important after a change in yourself (recent illness, new shoes, new pain that effects your mobility) or a change in your environment (move, have visitors, new furniture).

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Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Be Safe in the Community

What do I need to know?

Whether you are walking around the park to stay active or just going to the store, falls can happen outdoors. Fall hazards in the community are unpredictable. You don't have any control over the hazards other people may leave in your path, whether a building is maintained properly, if there are safety features available (handrails, grab bars, curb cuts, and ramps), or if the lighting is adequate. So it is important to be careful outside of your home to prevent slips, trips and falls.

What can I do to reduce my fall risk?

Take your time, slow down, be aware of your environment and look about 6 steps ahead to give you time to adjust your steps to avoid potential hazards.

Watch for obstacles in your path such as boxes, bags of trash, doormats, door thresholds, uneven pavement, sidewalk cracks, and tree roots.

Avoid walking in crowded places. Shop during non-peak hours.

Be extra careful during and after stormy weather. Rain, snow, and ice can make any surface slippery.

Use caution on stairs. Hold onto the handrail and be aware that the step height may be higher or lower than normal.

Use your cane or walker in the community, if recommended. A walking aide will remind others to be more careful and considerate of you.

Keep a flashlight with you to illuminate your path at night or when in dark places such as a restaurant or movie theatre.

Call ahead to inquire about the availability of adapted bathrooms, ramps and bright lighting.

When visiting other people's homes, ask for a guided tour so you can alert yourself to flooring changes, steps and the location of the bathroom.

While riding public transportation such as buses and trains it is important to plan ahead: have your ticket or money ready when you board; travel at not peak times; ask the driver to not take off until you are seated; take the first seat – up front if possible; keep a hand free to hold on; don't get out of your seat or change seats when the bus is moving; when you get off the bus pause, and go in the direction the bus is traveling.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Feet, Footwear and Clothing

What do I need to know?

Taking care of your feet and choosing safe footwear and clothing is an important part of preventing falls. As we grow older our feet can develop problems such as corns, calluses, bunions and in-grown toenails. These changes can be painful, affect your balance and ability to walk and increase your risk for falls. Keeping an eye on your feet can even give you an early warning about serious health problems such as diabetes, arthritis, nerve damage, poor blood circulation and other foot problems. Feet that are healthy and pain-free help you keep your balance. Good balance can prevent falls. Healthy feet also allow you to stay active.

Feet

- Pick up your feet when you walk
- Inspect your feet and footwear everyday. Check for redness, blisters, cuts, sores, cracks, change in temperature, swelling or loss of feeling. If you notice any of these changes, contact your doctor.
- Exercise your feet
- See a podiatrist if you cannot cut your own toenails safely

Footwear

- Choose shoes that are well-fitting; supportive; secure with laces or Velcro closures; lightweight; have a low, broad heel; have a thin, textured and slip-resistance sole.
- Avoid slippers, walking barefoot or walking in stocking feet.

Clothing

- Avoid loose robes and loose robe ties
- Avoid clothes with wide and open pockets that stick out and catch doorknobs or furniture.
- Avoid sleeves are not too long, too open or too wide.
- Avoid pants or dresses that are too long and can cause you to trip

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Manage Your Health

The natural aging process and the effects of acute and chronic medical conditions may put you at a higher risk for a fall. Osteoporosis causes bones to become fragile and fracture more easily. Low blood pressure or a heart condition can cause dizziness. Parkinson's, arthritis or having had a stroke can affect your ability to move easily and can slow reaction time. Diabetes can cause fainting if your blood sugar levels are unstable. Memory loss, depression or impaired concentration may lower your awareness and attention to fall hazards. Even a short-term illness with fever, vomiting or diarrhea can temporarily increase your risk of falling.

What can I do to reduce my fall risk?

Have regular check-ups with your doctor to ensure your medical conditions are well managed. Understand your conditions, ask questions and join a support group.

Make the most of your doctor visits. Bring a list of your questions and concerns. Repeat things back to your doctor in your own words to make sure you understand. Take notes. If you need more time, ask for another visit.

To lower your risk of a hip fracture it is important to get adequate vitamin D and calcium – from food and/or from supplements. Do weight-bearing exercises. Get screen and treated for osteoporosis (men can get osteoporosis as well).

Stay active physically and mentally. Exercise your body regularly through social and recreational activities. Exercise your brain regularly by continuing to learn, or with exercises designed to challenge cognitive skills.

Eat at least three meals every day, with plenty of fruits and vegetables. Consume foods high in calcium, such as dairy, for strong bones. Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from the five food groups. Drinking water is essential, aim for 6–8 glasses each day.

Whenever you have been lying or sitting for more than 20 minutes, sit on the side of the bed or upright in your chair for a few minutes before you stand up. Pump your ankles 10 times. Stand, pause for the count of 10 and take one slow deep breath before you take a step. This is especially important in the middle of the night, before getting up to use the bathroom.

If you experience a fever, vomiting or diarrhea, see your doctor. Drink fluids. Arrange for in-home nursing aides to help if you're unsteady, weak or fatigued.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Know Your Medications

Prescription and nonprescription medications help you stay well. Many older adults are unaware that their daily medications may increase their fall risk. Aging affects the absorption, distribution, metabolism, and elimination of medications. Some medications can increase your risk for falling by causing adverse side effects such as blurred vision, confusion, dizziness, drowsiness or unsteadiness. Simply taking four or more medications can increase your risk of falling.

Some medications are considered high-risk and include: anti-psychotics, diuretics, antidepressants, anti-anxiety, sleep medications and tranquilizers. Other medications that may cause problems include those prescribed to treat seizure disorders, blood pressure-lowering medications, cholesterol-lowering medications, heart medications, and painkillers.

Ask your doctor if you are taking any of these and whether your dose could be lowered or eliminated altogether. Do not stop any medication without talking to your doctor.

What can I do to reduce my risk?

Take an active role in your own health. Ask questions about your medicines. Make sure you know when to take them and what they're for. Find out about possible side effects

Keep an up to dated list of your medications (both prescription and over the counter medicines) in your wallet or purse and on the refrigerator. Take this list to every health appointments.

Review all your medications (prescription, over-the-counter and herbal remedies) with your doctor at least every six months. Bring them to your appointment in a brown paper bag.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking any over-the-counter medications or herbal remedies.

Always take your medications as directed. It's easier to keep track of your medications if you use a medicine organizer.

If any side effects are troubling you, or if you think your medicine is not helping, talk to your doctor. Do not stop any medication without talking to your doctor.

Use only one pharmacy for all your prescriptions. Your pharmacist can review your medications and communicate any concerns with your doctors.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Consequences of Falling

There are three negative consequences that can result following a fall: a physical injury, fear of falling and health complications that result from not being able to get up from the floor.

Physical Injury

10% of fall in community- dwelling older adults cause a moderate to severe injury such as a fracture, head injury or laceration.

What can I do?

- Follow the suggestions given in this class. Exercise your balance and stay active, have your doctor review your medications, have your vision checked every year, wear safe footwear, remove tripping hazards at home, add supports such as grab bars and handrails and be careful and slow down.

Fear of Falling

30-50% of older adults fear falling. Fear of falling is a rational response especially with activities that pose a higher risk of falling or are more challenging to our balance. By having some fear of falling, we may be more alert to possible safety hazards and pay more attention to how we can move around safely.

When fear of falling becomes irrational a person loses confidence and restricts their activities. This inactivity causes weakness and less mobility which leads to the possibility of a fall and the cycle repeats itself.

What can I do?

- Talk to someone about your concerns.
- If you have a fall, fill out a *Post-Fall Questionnaire* to determine what caused it and what you can do to reduce the chance of falling again.
- See a physical therapist about a walking device.

Not Being Able to Get Up

About half of the older adults who fall cannot get back up without help. The longer one is down, the greater the risk of medical problems such as pressure ulcers, dehydration and hypothermia.

What can I do?

- Learn how to get up from the floor
- If you live alone arrange to call someone everyday at a set time.
- Carry a cell phone or obtain a medical alert system such as Phillips Lifeline which is a 24-hour monitored system or an Emergency Auto Dialer which calls a pre-programmed phone number.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

If You Fall

No one plans to have a fall, but it is important to know what you would do in the event you do fall. If you are prepared and have practiced getting off the floor you will feel more confident and have less fear of falling.

Here are some points to remember.

1. Don't panic. Take some deep breaths. Stay positive.
2. If you try to get up too quickly, you may make an injury worse.
3. Assess the situation and determine if you are injured.
4. If you cannot get up off the floor or you believe that you are injured do not attempt to get up, follow the **Rest and Wait Plan**.
5. If you believe you are uninjured and feel strong enough to get up, follow the **Up and About Plan**.

Rest and Wait Plan

1. Get help.
 - Use your Personal Emergency Response Systems, if you have one
 - Try and reach the phone and call 911.
 - Attract someone's attention by banging on the wall or floor and shouting.
 - Crawl or slide to the front door and call for help.
2. Rest and wait for help to arrive.
3. If your bladder "lets go", try to move away from the damp area.
4. Gently move around to keep any one part of your body from getting too much pressure.

Up and About Plan

1. Roll onto your hands and knees and crawl towards a sturdy chair.
2. Place your hands on the chair and place your stronger foot flat on the floor with your knee bent towards your stomach.
3. Lean forward, putting your weight onto your arms. Count to three and then push with your legs, feet and hands until you are standing upright.
4. Turn around and sit down. Rest there until you feel ready to stand.

Every fall needs a medical assessment

- Immediate medical attention if there is an injury, a blow to the head, loss of consciousness and/or signs of confusion or if you take a blood thinner.
- A routine evaluation if there is no injury. It is important to understand what caused the fall and what you can do to prevent another fall. A fall may be the first and main indication of another underlying and treatable problem.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Good Sleep Habits

Personal Habits

- Stick to a regular bedtime and wake time.
- Exercise regularly but not within four hours of bedtime.
- Spend time in the sunlight everyday.
- Don't have caffeinated drinks after lunch. This includes caffeinated beverages such as coffee, tea and sodas, as well as chocolate.
- If frequent trips to the toilet are a problem during the night, try not to drink too much before bedtime and make sure you go to bed with an empty bladder.
- Avoid smoking close to bedtime.
- Try not to take a daytime nap, if you must than limit the time to 20 minutes.
- Don't drink alcohol in the evening. It might help you fall asleep, but it will probably make you wake up in the middle of the night.
- Don't - Engage in stimulating activity just before bed. Playing a competitive game, watching an exciting program on television or a movie, or having an important family discussion stimulates your mind and thoughts will overflow to the bedroom.

Sleeping Environment

- Find a comfortable temperature setting for sleeping and keep the room well ventilated.
- Block out distracting noise, and eliminate as much light as possible.
- Reserve the bed for sleep and intimacy. Avoid watching TV in bed.

Getting Ready For Bed

- Establish a relaxing before sleep routine. Take a warm bath or spent a few minutes of reading.
- Practice relaxation techniques.
- Don't take your worries to bed.
- Don't lie in bed for a long time trying to go to sleep. After 30 minutes of trying to sleep, get up and do something quiet for a while, like reading or listening to quiet music. Then try again to fall asleep in bed.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

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Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Hand Strengthening Putty Exercises

Perform the checked exercises _____ time(s) per day, _____ days a week

Repeat _____ times

Perform these exercises with **right** **left** **both** hands (circle one)

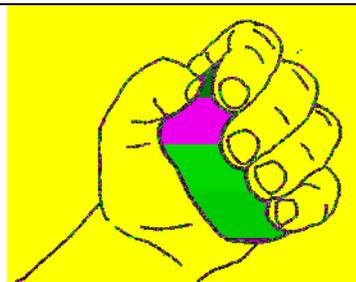
Finger Flexion

Shape the putty into a ball. Squeeze the putty with your whole hand.



Thumb Flexion

Shape the putty into a ball. Hold the putty in your closed hand. Press your thumb into the putty.



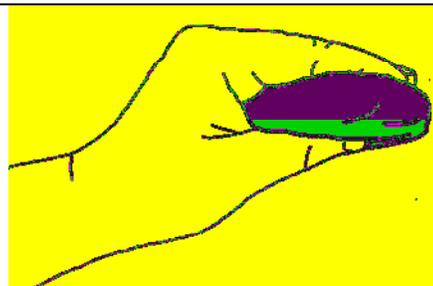
Lateral or Key Pinch

Shape the putty into a ball. Pinch the putty between your thumb and the side of your index finger.



Lumbrical Pinch

Shape the putty into a ball. Hold your fingers straight and your knuckles bent. Squeeze the putty between your fingers and thumb.



Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Hand Strengthening Putty Exercises

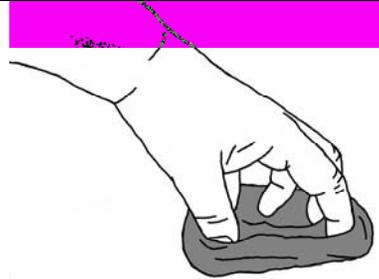
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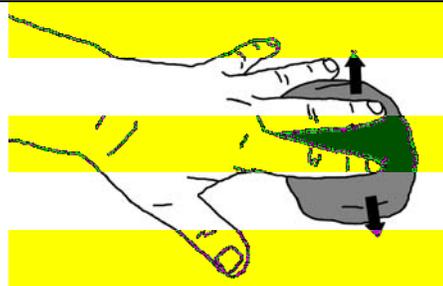
Finger Extension

Flatten the putty into a pancake. Place your fingertips together on the putty and spread the putty outward.



Finger Abduction

Flatten the putty into a pancake. Spread the putty apart using two fingers at a time.



Finger Adduction

Reshape the putty into a sausage. Squeeze the putty between the insides of your fingers.



Finger Tip Pinch

Reshape the putty into a sausage. Pinch the putty between your thumb and each of fingers individually.





High Fiber Diet

What is Fiber?

Dietary fiber is a complex carbohydrate and is part of plant material that cannot be digested or absorbed in the bloodstream. Two types of fiber are soluble and insoluble. Most foods contain mixtures of soluble and insoluble fibers.

Soluble Fiber

Soluble fiber dissolves and thickens in water to form a gel. Good sources of soluble fiber include dried beans and legumes, oatmeal, oat bran, barley and citrus fruits. This type of fiber may help with weight loss as it makes you feel full longer. Research has shown that this type of fiber may also help lower blood cholesterol.

Insoluble Fiber

Insoluble fiber is usually referred to as “roughage,” and includes the woody or structural parts of plants, such as fruit and vegetable skins, wheat bran and whole-grain cereals. This type of fiber tends to speed up the passage of material through the digestive tract and reduce the risk of colon cancer, as well as diverticular disease.

How Much Fiber Should I Eat?

Experts recommend that a healthy adult eat 20 to 35 grams of dietary fiber per day. You can meet this goal by eating a well-balanced diet containing a variety of foods such as two servings of fruits, three servings of vegetables and three or more servings of whole-grain breads or cereals. Remember to increase the dietary fiber in your diet gradually to avoid gastric distress, and to drink plenty of fluid (8 cups per day) to avoid constipation. If you have a history of diverticular disease, you should avoid corn, nuts and seeds, and any foods containing them.

How Do I Increase the Fiber in My Diet?

- Eat fresh fruit for snacks or desserts, such as berries, oranges, prunes or apricots.
- Eat fruits and vegetables with their peels, such as pears, apples, peaches and squash.
- Add cooked or canned beans, split peas or lentils to your favorite soup, stew, salad, meatloaf or casserole.
- Choose whole-grain breakfast cereal, such as oatmeal, bran flakes, raisin bran or wheat flakes. Look for a cereal with 2 or more grams of dietary fiber per serving.
- Choose baked goods made using whole grains, such as whole wheat bread, oatmeal bread or muffins, multigrain bread, graham crackers and whole wheat bagels. Make sure the whole grain ingredient is the first or second on the label.



High Fiber Diet (cont'd)

Making Fiber Fit

(Foods with an asterisk () should be avoided with diverticulosis.)*

<u>Fruits and Vegetables</u>	<u>Serving Size</u>	<u>Dietary Fiber (grams)</u>
*Raspberries	1 cup	9
*Figs, dried	10	9
*Blackberries	3/4 cup	7
Pears, with skin	1	5
Green peas, cooked	1/2 cup	4
Prunes	3, medium-sized	4
Blueberries	3/4 cup	4
Turnip greens, parsnips, zucchini or carrots, cooked	1/2 cup	3
*Corn	1/2 cup	3
Potato, with skin	1, medium-sized	3
Apple, with skin	1, medium-sized	3
Orange or banana	1, medium-sized	2
Spinach, broccoli or green beans	1/2 cup	2
<u>Grains and Breads</u>		
Oat bran muffin	1	5
Graham crackers	3 squares	4
Barley, uncooked	2 tablespoons	3
Whole wheat English muffin	1 whole	3
Whole wheat pancakes	2	3
Brown rice, cooked	1/2 cup	2
Whole wheat bread	1 slice	2
<u>Cooked Legumes</u>		
Chick peas (Garbanzo)	1/3 cup	10
Black-eyed peas	1/3 cup	8
Baked beans	1/3 cup	5
Pinto, kidney, black or lima beans	1/3 cup	4
<u>Cereals</u>		
General Mills Fiber One®	1/2 to 3/4 cup	12
Kellogg's All-Bran®	1/2 to 3/4 cup	9
Ralston Bran Chex®	1/2 to 3/4 cup	5
Nabisco Shredded Wheat and Bran®	1/2 to 3/4 cup	4
Bran flakes	1/2 to 3/4 cup	4
Quaker Instant Oatmeal®	1/2 to 3/4 cup	3
General Mills Wheaties®	1/2 to 3/4 cup	3

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Suggestions for Improving Memory

What is Memory?

“Memory” is your brain taking in, storing, retrieving, and using information.

Take Care of Yourself

- Get a good night’s sleep.
- Breathe deeply.
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat a balanced diet
- Drink water.
- Reduce your stress.

Exercise Your Memory

- Play word puzzles (crosswords, logic, word find, and anagrams).
- Play word games (Boggle, Scrabble, Wheel of Fortune).
- Play number puzzles (Sudoku, math puzzles).
- Play card games (bridge, canasta).
- Read often and read different types of books.
- Remember and repeat groups of word, such as memorizing a grocery list.
- Learn new words from a dictionary.
- Learn a new language.
- Use your left hand if you are right-handed or your right hand if you are left-handed.

Make Changes to Your Environment

- Keeping a notepad by the phone to make a note of phone calls and messages
- Putting essential information on a corkboard
- Deciding on a special place to keep important objects like keys, wallets or glasses and always putting them back in the same place
- Attaching important items to your person so they can’t be mislaid, for example using a neck cord for reading glasses
- Labeling cupboards as a reminder of where things are kept
- Labeling perishable food with the date it was opened
- Painting the toilet door a distinctive color so it is easier to find
- Labeling doors as a reminder of which room is which

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Suggestions for Improving Memory

External Memory Aides

Follow a Routine

- Follow a routine. Try to do the same things at the same time everyday, such as eating, taking a walk, and going to bed. Make a chart of regular events, perhaps using pictures or photographs, on a corkboard
- Keep a Daily Planning Notebook
- Look at your schedule often during the day, so you don't forget to do things.
- Set a specific time each day to focus on planning and organizing for the next day.
- Set a specific day for each of your household chores. For example, do the laundry on Mondays, go grocery shopping on Tuesdays, and clean the bathroom on Wednesdays.

Use Reminders

- Write down the things you need to remember. Use a dry erase board.
- Use a large calendar hung in a prominent location so you will see it frequently.
- Keep a Daily Planning Notebook to write down ideas you want to remember and thoughts you have. Keep it with you all the time and try to write in it every day
- Place photographs of your family, friends, and other people important to you near the telephone. Label the photographs with their names and phone numbers.
- Have step-by-step instructions written out and posted on how to work appliances, such as the microwave, coffeemaker, or computer.

Let Someone or Something Remember

- Ask your bank to automatically pay your bills.
- Set an alarm to remind you when it is time to take your medicine or use a medicine organizer with a built-in timer.
- Have a family member take notes during meetings with your doctor or health care provider.
- Use telephones that auto-dial stored numbers.

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Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Suggestions for Improving Memory

Internal Memory Aides

Getting information into memory more efficiently

- Pay attention to what you want to remember.
- Break down new information into small parts. Learn the small parts instead of trying to learn everything at one time.
- Repeat the new learning back in your own words.
- Discover how you learn best. Is it by seeing (reading), by hearing (listening) or by doing. To improve your memory, use a combination of these learning styles. For example: To learn how to get to a new store (1) look at a map to the store (seeing), (2) describe the route verbally (hearing), (3) have someone accompany you the first time (doing).

Use memory tricks

- Repeat information - When you meet a new person, try to repeat his/her name several times during the conversation.
- Run through the alphabet to help you think of words or names you're having trouble remembering.
- Make associations Use landmarks to help you find places, a house number of 1960 that you associate with the year your daughter was born. Associate someone you just met with a college professor with the same name.
- Form a visual image about what you want to remember. For example, someone you meet named Mike can be visualized by picturing him singing into a microphone (mic). The more vivid, colorful, and three-dimensional the images are, the easier they will be to remember.
- Chunk information - arrange a long list in smaller units or categories that are easier to remember. Your Social Security number is grouped in sets of 3, 2 and 4 digits, your phone number is grouped in sets of 3, 3 and 4 digits. A grocery list can be grouped by category. Group the names of your grandchildren by family.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Suggestions for Improving Thinking Skills

Take Care of Yourself

- Get a good night's sleep.
- Breathe deeply.
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat a balanced diet
- Drink water.
- Reduce your stress.
- Wear your glasses and/or hearing aids.

Avoid Getting Tired

- Plan activities when you have the most energy.
- Take breaks during the day.

Minimize Distractions

- Focus on one thing at a time
- Find a quiet place.
- Close the curtains.
- Turn off the TV or radio.

Get Organized

- Create step by step checklists to follow.
- Organize so that all items are in consistent places.
- Return items to their place when you are finished.
- Items that are often used together are placed beside each other.
- Schedule a weekly time to clean and organize your activity areas.
- Allow yourself plenty of time to plan activities and record your plans, using as many aids as you find helpful (such as calendars, diaries, electronic timing devices, mobile phones and pagers).

Ask for Help

- Set a timer or alarm to remind you of important things to do in the day, such as starting to cook a meal.
- Have other people verbally remind you to start tasks.
- Ask other to give you clear step-by-step instructions verbally and in writing and if possible, to include pictures or drawing.
- Step-by-step checklists can be placed in key locations in the house in order to remind you of the different sequences to go through to do a task, such as getting ready in the morning or preparing a meal.
- Discussing your plans with others will make you more likely to remember and the other person can remind you of things if necessary.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Suggestions for Improving Thinking Skills

Follow a Routine

- Keep a Daily Planning Notebook
- Look at your schedule often during the day, so you don't forget to do things.
- Check off each activity that you have accomplished. This will help you to stay on track.
- Set a specific time each day to focus on planning and organizing for the next day.
- Set a specific day for each of your household chores. For example, do the laundry on Mondays, go grocery shopping on Tuesdays, and clean the bathroom on Wednesdays.
- Make a chart of regular events, perhaps using pictures or photographs, on a corkboard

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Improving Your Other Senses

Improve Your Sense of Touch

Determine the various types and textures of materials such as wool, silk, cotton, plastic.

Identify small objects, coins

Sort sizes of screws, nuts.

Practice using electrical cords.

Peel and slice fruits and vegetables.

Identify changes in floor coverings.

Improve Your Sense of Hearing

Identify people by their voice and walk.

Identify the sounds in your environment. The direction and distance of the specific sounds.

Determine the location of dropped items.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Improving Your Other Senses

Improve Your Sense of Taste

Identify kitchen items such as salt, spices, sugar, vinegar and coffee.

Improve Your Sense of Smell

Identify common household spices and foods.

Identify perfumes and toiletries.

Learn the scents associated with various types of stores and businesses.

Develop Your Memory Skills

Memorize telephone numbers, addresses, birthdays, anniversaries.

Use games that requiring recall of letters, numbers or musical series (Simon game).

Practice mental arithmetic.

Remember stories, current events.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Joint Protection

Respect Pain

- Stop activities before the point of discomfort
- Avoid or modify activities that put strain on painful or stiff joints.
- Pain that lasts more than 1 hour after an activity indicates that the activity was too stressful for your joints.
- Wear splints and/or braces as recommended by your therapist.

Balance Rest and Activity

- Take frequent breaks or change activities.
- Rest before you become fatigued or sore.
- Avoid activities that cannot be stopped
- Avoid staying in one position for a long time.
- Sit if the task takes more than 10 minutes.
- Stand up after sitting for 20 to 30 minutes.
- Allow extra time for activities, avoid rushing
- Plan your day ahead of time and alternate light and moderate activities throughout the day.

Use Your Stronger, Larger Muscles and Joints

- Push open a door using your body weight rather than the fingertips.
- Lift objects by scooping them with both hands, palms up.
- Instead of using a pinch, use a grip.
- Instead of lifting objects, slide them.
- Place a loop on the refrigerator door and use your elbow to open.
- Close cabinets using the palm of the hand with fingers straight
- Close drawers with the side of your hand or your hip.



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Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Joint Protection

Maintain Strength and Range of Motion

- Loss of range of motion and strength result in loss of function.
- Performing self-care tasks will help maintain your range of motion.
- Exercises daily to help maintain your strength and range of motion.
- Exercise in a pain free range

Use Good Body Mechanics

- To pick up items from the floor, stoop by bending your knees and hips, or sit in a chair and bend over at your hips or use a reacher.
- Carry heavy objects close to your chest, supporting the weight on your forearms.
- Maintain good posture.



Reduce the Effort Needed to Do the Job

- Ask for help
- Add leverage to items to reduce the force to operate them, such as levered faucets and door handles.
- Sit to bathe on a shower chair.
- Use long-handled dressing equipment.
- Eat with lightweight utensils and dishes.
- Use a lazy Susan to keep desktops/countertops clear and tools within easy reach.
- Use electric appliances (toothbrush, razor, jar opener).
- Use prepared foods and freeze leftovers for an easy meal

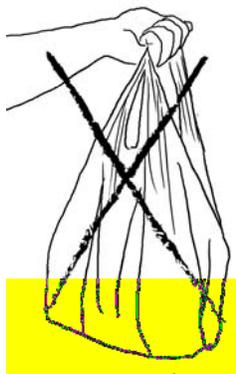


Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Joint Protection

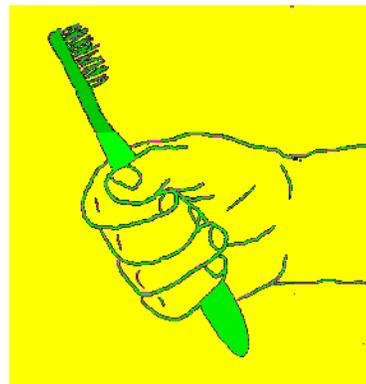
Avoid Using a Tight Grip

- Hold everything no tighter than necessary.
- Release tight grasp frequently if you have to use it.
- Don't carry heavy handbags, pails, and bags by the handle.
- Use built-up handles on writing utensils, pot handles and tools.
- Use adaptive equipment such as jar openers.
- Instead of wringing out a washcloth, press out the water with your palms.



Avoid Positions That Push Your Other Fingers Towards Your Little Finger

- Finger motions should be in the direction of your thumb whenever possible.
- Don't rest your chin on the side of your fingers.
- Add levers to keys, handles, and knobs.
- Hold toothbrush and hairbrush straight across the palm.
- Use a cardholder when playing cards.

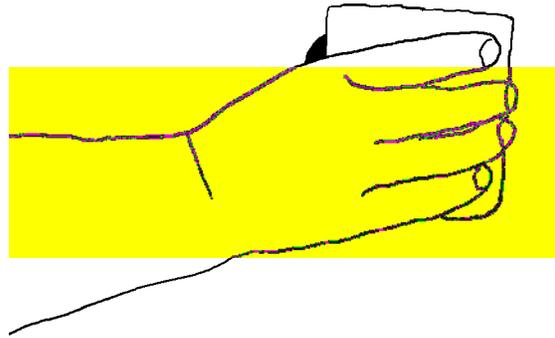
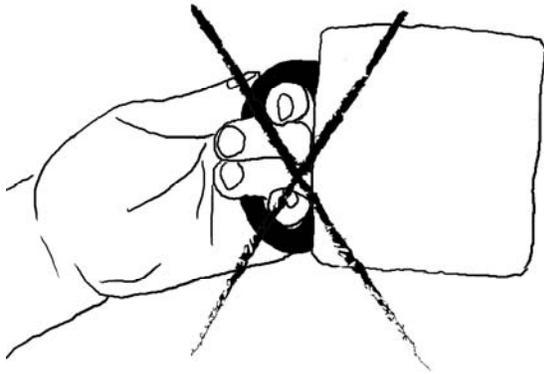


Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Joint Protection

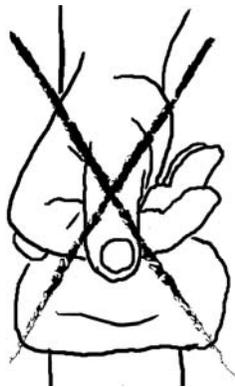
Avoid Pinching Items Between Your Thumb and Your Fingers

- Hold a book, plate or mug in the palms of your hands.
- If you're reading for long periods, use a book holder.
- Instead of a clutch-style purse, select one with a shoulder strap.
- Squeeze out toothpaste using your palms.



Avoid Pressure Against the Backs of Your Fingers.

- This occurs when you push up from a chair using a closed fist or rest your chin on the backs of your fingers.
- Use your palms while holding your fingers straight.



Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Kitchen Management

Organize

Try to put away items in the same place.

Organize utensils in drawers with a method that makes sense to you (for example, forks on the left, spoons to the immediate right).

Develop a system to organize foods on cupboard shelves and in the refrigerator so that every type of food has its designated place.

Cutting and Chopping

Use cutting boards in colors that contrast with your food. For example, a white cutting board for slicing red apples or carrots, a dark colored board for onions.

Measuring Ingredients

To measure boiling water, measure the water before heating it.

Use a large print measuring cup.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Kitchen Management

Adapting Cookbooks and Recipes

Cookbooks are available in Braille, large print, and recorded versions.

Type and print your own recipes or handwrite using large bold print.

Pouring, Draining, and Mixing

Place a tray or cookie sheet underneath the bowl while pouring and mixing.

Mix and pour in the sink to catch spills.

Use a tray when carrying things that might spill.

Using the Stove, Oven, or Electric Frying Pan

Place food in a pan, and the pan on a burner, before the heat is turned on.

Use long sleeve oven mitt.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Labeling and Marking

Labeling Clothes

Using safety pins - For example, put a safety pin on the inside label of the black pants pointing horizontally, a safety pin pointing vertically on the brown pair, and nothing on the blue pair.

Use a colored marker on the clothing tags.

Remove the labels from some clothes and not the others.

Have matching clothes hung together on the same hanger.

Learn to identify your clothes by the feel of the fabric, the style, buttons or other features.

Purchase a clothing identifier product to label clothing with tags of different colors and shapes

Labeling Food

Rubber band around milk carton to distinguish from juice carton.

1 of 2

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Labeling and Marking

Labeling Food

Place labels marked with bold writing or color-coded around food items with a rubber band.

Arrange food items in a certain order and location.

Use varying numbers of rubber bands to distinguish one type of product from another—two bands for mixed fruits, three for green vegetables, four for sauces, etc.

Use magnetic letters on canned goods.

Marking Appliances

Use raised plastic dots with adhesive backing to mark the settings on appliances, computers and keyboards.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Levels of Shortness of Breath

Inhale, then count out loud to fifteen

Level 0:

Counts to fifteen easily without taking an additional breath
Unaware of the need to breathe

Level 1:

Counts to fifteen with 1 additional breath
Slight awareness of the need to breathe
Able to carry on a conversation without shortness of breath.
Beginning to use upper chest muscles

Level 2:

Counts to fifteen with 2 additional breaths
Only able to converse in short sentences. Must breathe after each sentence
Using upper chest muscles

Level 3:

Counts to fifteen with 3 additional breaths
Breathing is rapid and shallow
Upper chest muscles are prominently functioning
Only able to speak in very short phrases of three to four words

Level 4:

Unable to count
Very short of breath, not talking, just concentrating on breathing

This technique can be used to monitor if an activity is too taxing for you. If you need more than one additional breath to count to 15 (level 1) then the activity is consuming too much energy. Slow down and apply your energy conservation techniques and pursed lip breathing to the activity.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Lighting Suggestions

Lighting Suggestions

People with macular degeneration almost always require much higher light levels, especially for reading and close-up work.

People with glaucoma usually benefit from higher light levels.

Less light may work better for those with central cataracts.

Increase General Lighting

Use several lamps to light a room to create even light levels. Consider the type of light bulb, the strength of light bulb and placement of the light in a room.

Choose warm white Compact Fluorescent Bulbs (CFB's) or standard incandescent bulbs with soft white or pink finish.

Make sure lighting is adequate at night.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Lighting Suggestions

Increase General Lighting

Use tall table lamps with light-colored shades and wide brims at the bottom.

Use floor lamps that direct light toward the ceiling with fluorescent bulbs.

Consider installing motion-sensing lighting.

Increase Task Lighting

Try a lamp with a flexible neck so you can direct the light exactly where you need it.

Experiment with a full-spectrum bulb (the “Ott Light”, “Ultralux) or a Chromalux incandescent bulb.

Aim the light directly on the object. To reduce glare make sure the bulb is below eye level.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Communication Tasks

Reading

Learn eccentric viewing, scanning and page-orientation techniques.

Use magnifiers.

Place a transparent yellow acetate overlay on pages to improve reading.

Obtain large print items such as books, monthly bills, checks and transaction registers.

Use talking books.

Writing

Increase task lighting.

Use contrast - Black or navy ink on ivory paper is best (bright white paper may cause glare)
Place paper on a dark colored mat to avoid writing off the page.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Communication Tasks

Writing

Use writing guides, bold-line or raised-line paper and bold-line pens.

Use screen magnifiers on the computer, screen reading software, video magnifiers, electronic note takers.

Telephone Use

To make it easier to dial:

Obtain a large button phone.

Mark the buttons with raised dots.

Obtain telephone directory exemption.

To maintain a list of phone numbers.

Use a large print address book.

Create a large print list of important numbers.

Use a phone with memory function for storing numbers.

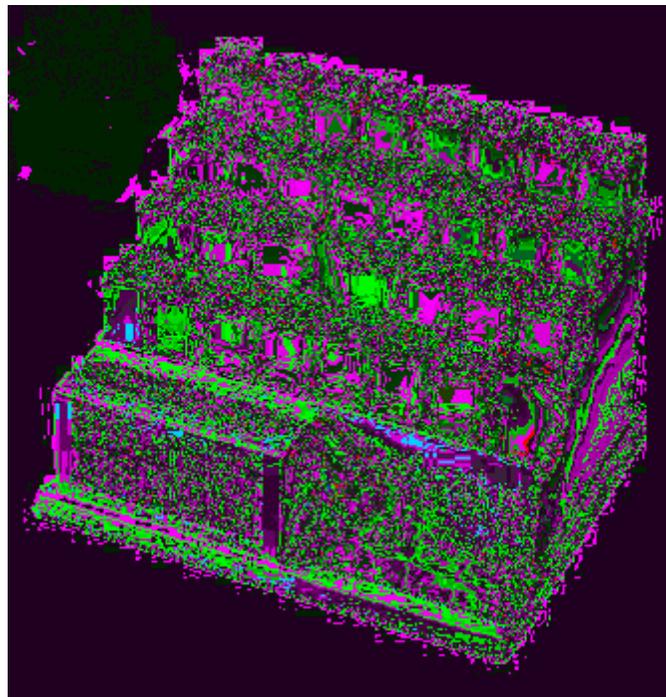
Telling Time

Obtain large print calendars and talking clocks.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Medication Management Resources:

1. E-Pill - Medication Reminders
800-549-0095, www.epill.com
2. Forgetting the Pill - Personal Reminder Products
877-367-4382, www.forgettingthepill.com
3. OnTimeRx will send you e-mail, phone, cell phone, and pager alerts for all types of reminders - daily medications, monthly refills, doctor and dentist appointments or other events.
866-944-8966, www.ontimerx.com
4. MedCenter talking pillbox. Organizes a month's worth of pills and alerts you four times a day, shown below.
866-600-3244, www.medcentersystems.com
5. Accupax, pre-packaged, dosed medications
888-600-9692, <http://accupax.com/>



Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Medication Tips

Medication Tips

Have your pharmacy put large-print labels on your medications.

Use a dark-colored tray or box lid when organizing medications. The contrast with the medication containers will help with identifying them. The tray's raised edge can prevent dropped pills from rolling onto the floor.

Store medicines in different places that serve as reminders, such as the nightstand if it's to be taken at night, or in kitchen if it should be taken three times a day.

Use a weekly or daily pill organizer.

Use a magnifier to read labels. Keep one in the medicine cabinet.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Medication Tips

Medication Tips

The first letter of the medication name can be written in bold marker or Hi-Marks on the lid. The size and shape of some containers may be enough of a clue to help you recognize them.

Some over-the-counter medications, certain brand cough syrups and topical creams, for example, are recognizable by their unique shape, size, texture or smell.

Rubber bands can also be used to tell bottles apart or to provide dosage information.

For diabetic management there are talking glucometers, insulin needle magnifiers and large print diabetes registers.

Talking scale and talking blood pressure meters are also available.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Mobility Tips

Mobility

Practice counting the number of steps it takes to walk from one area to another.

Count doorways or other obstructions in the path from one area to another.

For self-protection when walking, extend free arm parallel to the floor, with elbow flexed slightly less than 90 and fingertips extended.

When an object is dropped, localize sound to determine where the object fell, then stoop and use a fan-like motion to sweep the floor with one hand.

Ask sighted people to describe the environment.

Ask sighted people to walk you around the perimeter of the room to determine size.

Ask a sighted person to draw with their finger on your back to show relationships of objects in a room.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Money Management

Identifying Money

Coins - Focus on the differences in size, thickness and edge. The dime is the smallest coin and the half-dollar is the largest. The penny and the nickel have a smooth edge. The dime, quarter, and half-dollar have a ridged edge. The nickel is the thickest coin.

Bills - Fold bills in different ways. Leave \$1 bills unfolded. Fold \$5 lengthwise. Fold \$10 by width. Fold \$20 lengthwise and then by width.

Managing Bank Account

Statements are available in large print.

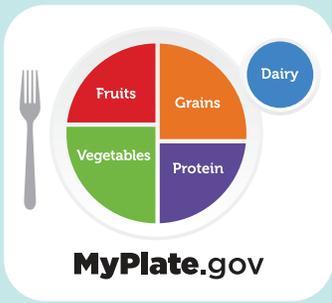
Use large-print checks and registers.

Calculators are available with large buttons.

Paying Bills

Ask a family member or friend to help.

Pay your bills on-line with electronic banking or by phone.



Small Changes Matter.

Start Simple With MyPlate Today.

Healthy eating is important at every stage of life.

Make half your plate fruits & vegetables.

Focus on whole fruits.



Make half your grains whole grains.

Vary your veggies.



Vary your protein routine.

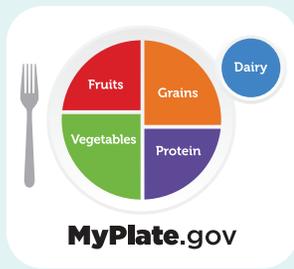
Move to low-fat or fat-free dairy milk or yogurt (or lactose-free dairy or fortified soy versions).



Choose foods and beverages with less added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.

The benefits add up over time, bite by bite.

Make every bite count



Take a look at your current eating routine. Pick one or two ways that you can switch to choices today that are rich in nutrition.

A healthy eating routine can help boost your health now and in the years to come. Think about how your food choices come together over the course of your day or week to help you create a healthy eating routine.

It's important to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. Choose options for meals, beverages, and snacks that have limited added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.



Choose from these simple tips to help you...



Focus on whole fruits

- Start your day with **fruit at breakfast**. Top cereal with your favorite seasonal fruit, add bananas or chopped apples to pancakes, or mix a spoonful or two of raisins into hot oatmeal.
- Keep **ready-to-eat fruits** in the refrigerator for a quick snack.
- For dinner, chop up a combination of seasonal, frozen, or canned fruits to make a **quick fruit salsa** to top fish or chicken. Add fruit such as orange sections, apple wedges, or grapes to a **salad**.



Vary your veggies

- Add shredded carrots to the lettuce and tomato **in your sandwich**, make **soup** from the veggies in your vegetable drawer, and **snack on raw vegetables**.
- Try a **stir-fry** with fresh or frozen vegetables for a quick meal or easy side dish.
- Pick out a vegetable that the family has not tried and **get a new recipe** from a cookbook, website, supermarket, or friend.



Make half your grains whole grains

- For breakfast, enjoy a whole-grain-based **hot or cold cereal**. Consider trying whole-grain puffs or flakes that are new to you—you might discover a new favorite!
- Instead of sandwich bread, try a **whole-grain pita, tortillas, naan or other whole-grain flatbread, sliced breads, or rolls**.
- Create your own trail mix with whole-grain cereal or enjoy whole-grain crackers with turkey, hummus, or avocado for a **healthy whole-grain snack**.

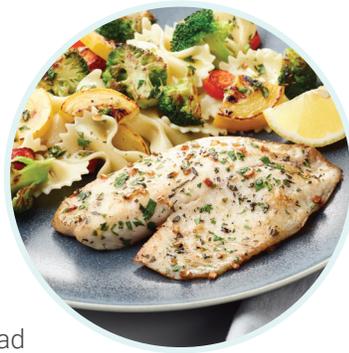


Protein



Vary your protein routine

- **Broil lean beef cuts** like sirloin, top round, or flank steak. **Roast lean types of pork tenderloin or loin chops** and slice into strips for dinner, salads, and sandwiches.
- **Have fish or seafood twice a week.** Make a lunchtime sandwich or salad with canned tuna, grill fresh or frozen tilapia or salmon for dinner, or enjoy fish tacos.
- **Meatless meals** are tasty and budget friendly. Try bean-based vegetarian chili or lentil soup, grilled or braised tofu with vegetables, or adding nuts to salads.



Dairy



Move to low-fat or fat-free dairy milk or yogurt (or lactose-free dairy or fortified soy versions)

- **Add low-fat or fat-free dairy** to oatmeal or pureed vegetable soups instead of water, and to smoothies or scrambled eggs.
- The nutrients in dairy are **important at every stage of life.** Include foods like low-fat or fat-free dairy milk or yogurt. Need an alternative? Try lactose-free dairy milk or yogurt that's low-fat or fat-free or fortified soy versions.
- Looking for a beverage? Grab a **glass of low-fat or fat-free milk or fortified soy milk** (soy beverage). Choose the unsweetened option.



Choose foods and beverages with less added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium

Limit



Tips for Less Added Sugars

- Choose **packaged foods that have less or no added sugars**, such as canned fruit packed in 100% juice for an easy snack, plain yogurt (you can add your own fruit), and unsweetened applesauce.
- Try chilled, **plain water or sparkling water with a squeeze of fruit** for a splash of flavor. Limit sugary beverages such as soda, lemonade, sports drinks, or fruit drinks.

Tips for Less Saturated Fat

- In place of foods higher in saturated fat, **look for foods like nuts, seeds, and fatty fish** like tuna, salmon, trout, and mackerel, which are high in unsaturated fats and a healthier choice.
- Choose **canola oil, olive oil, or other vegetable oils** for cooking.

Tips for Less Salt and Sodium

- Start simple by choosing foods with less sodium. **Check the Nutrition Facts label and choose foods with a lower percent (%) Daily Value (DV) for sodium** on the label, especially if a family member has high blood pressure, diabetes, or kidney disease.
- **Cook at home!** Preparing your own food puts you in control of how much sodium goes into your meals. Add flavor to foods with herbs, spices, lemon, lime, and vinegar instead of salt or seasonings high in sodium.





The Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Developed jointly by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* are the Nation's science-based guidance on how to eat for good health. The Guidelines encourage all Americans to start and maintain a healthy eating routine. Along with physical activity, improving what you eat can help you reduce your risk of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, some cancers, and obesity. Taking the steps in this brochure will help you follow the *Dietary Guidelines*.

For more information:

[MyPlate.gov](https://www.myplate.gov)

[DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov)



Food and Nutrition Service
USDA Publication number:
USDA-FNS-2020-2025-DGA-CP
December 2020

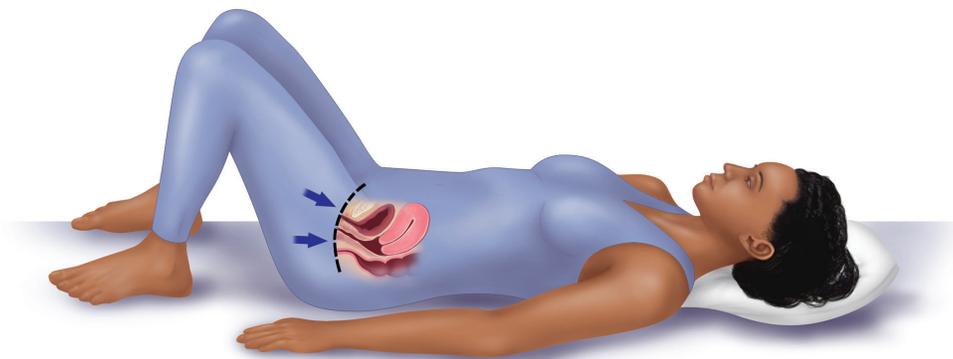
The U.S. Department of Agriculture is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises and Bladder Training



If you are experiencing urinary leakage, pelvic floor muscle exercises (Kegels) and bladder training are two things you can do to help control your urinary symptoms.



Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises

Learning how to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles can help reduce or stop urine leakage. Pelvic floor muscle exercises (PFME) are most helpful for women with mild to moderate urine leakage. Women with severe urine leakage often need more than exercises to improve.

Like any other form of exercise, it is important to do PFME correctly and regularly. Unfortunately, because pelvic muscles are hidden from view, it is hard to know if you are doing them correctly. To be sure that you are working the right muscles:

- Imagine you are going to pass gas and squeeze the muscles that would prevent that gas from escaping from your rectum. Exercising the muscles around the rectum will also strengthen those around the vagina and under the bladder.

- Use a hand mirror to look at your vaginal opening and the perineum (the space between the vagina and rectum). You should see the perineum lift up when you contract your pelvic muscles.
- While lying or sitting, place one finger inside your vagina. Squeeze as if you were trying to stop urine from coming out. You should feel your finger lifted and squeezed if you are correctly contracting your pelvic muscles.
- No one should be able to tell you are doing PFME – if you are visibly moving, you are not using the right muscles.
- You should not be contracting the gluteus (“butt”) or thigh muscles.

Keep your stomach and back muscles relaxed as you work those pelvic muscles. And, do not squeeze your legs together or hold your breath while doing the exercises. Try this routine:

1. Start by pulling in and holding a pelvic muscle squeeze for 3 seconds then relax for an equal amount of time (3 seconds).
2. Do this for 10 repetitions three times a day
3. Try to hold for 1 second longer each week until you are holding for a 10 second squeeze.
4. Remember to rest and breathe between contractions. Relaxing can be as important as squeezing.
5. At the beginning, do the exercises while lying down. As you get stronger; do the exercises while sitting or standing.

If you are not sure that you are doing the exercises correctly, ask your medical provider at a pelvic exam to check if your squeeze is working the right muscles. Or, ask for a referral to a physical therapist who specializes in pelvic floor muscle rehabilitation. The physical therapist will also check your back and abdominal strength, your gait and your posture. These all affect how your pelvic muscles work.

LEARN THE TERMS

Pelvic floor muscle exercises (Kegels): Exercises that strengthen the muscles of the pelvic floor. Regular daily exercising of the pelvic muscles can improve and even prevent urinary and bowel leakage.

Bladder training: Behavior therapy that helps you wait longer between bathroom trips, so that you go to the bathroom when it's convenient rather than when you feel that sudden urge to go.

Pelvic floor muscles: The bowl-shaped muscles in the pelvis that support the vagina, bladder, and rectum.

Urethra: Tube from the bladder to the outside of the body that urine passes through during urination.

Overactive bladder (OAB): Urinary urgency, usually with frequency and nocturia, and sometimes with urinary urgency incontinence. This occurs without an infection or other health problem.

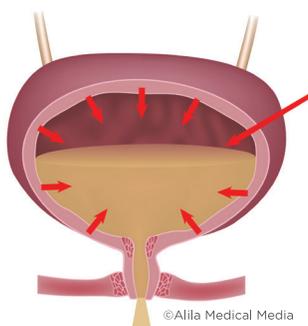
Constipation: Having a bowel movement fewer than three times a week, along with straining to produce a hard bowel movement.

Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises and Bladder Training

About Bladder Training

Now that you've got the right muscles and good strength, it's time to put that muscle to work!

Normally, the bladder can hold urine for 2 to 4 hours—then you feel an urge and should be able to walk to the bathroom and urinate normally. Women with overactive bladder feel a sudden urge to urinate immediately, which is called urgency. This urgency may lead to urine leakage. Bladder training can help hold the urine longer and overcome that gotta-go sensation without medicines or surgery.



CONTRACTING BLADDER

The muscle that lines the bladder, called the detrusor muscle, squeezes down too often and too powerfully. This causes urine to come out at the wrong times. Common things that bring this on are hearing running water, putting your key in the door at home, or seeing the toilet.

Bladder training programs involve urinating on a schedule. Over time, you increase the time between bathroom trips. This helps to increase the amount of urine that your bladder can hold. The goal of bladder training is to feel less need to rush to the bathroom frequently. Here are the steps to better bladder control:

STEP 1: Talk with your provider about your bladder symptoms. Get checked for a bladder infection or other health issues that can cause these symptoms. Keep a bladder diary. Write down the time when you urinate, how much you urinated, as well as what and how much you drink. In addition, log every time you feel the need to go.

STEP 2: Review the diary with your provider and decide on the best approach to bladder training. Make a commitment to get your bladder in shape either on your own or with help. Research shows bladder training reduces frequency and urgency. But, just like other exercise programs, bladder training requires motivation. With practice, this will get easier. Ask about working with a physical therapist if you think that would help you.

STEP 3: Make a training schedule. Most women start by urinating every 30 to 60 minutes during the day—whether or not you feel the need to go. If you get the urge to go before the scheduled time, do not run to the bathroom. Try some of the following strategies:

- Practice your PFME squeeze as explained above. This helps to close off the urethra,

preventing urine from leaking. Continue to squeeze until the need to go fades. Another option is to quickly squeeze and release the muscles, distracting the bladder from squeezing.

- Cross your legs or sit on a hard surface.
- Distract your mind. Count backwards from 100.
- Shift your position. You might find that leaning forward helps to settle your bladder.

STEP 4: After 1 to 2 weeks, if you are not having leaking accidents, increase the time between bathroom trips by 30 minutes. Stop making those “just in case” visits to the bathroom.

STEP 5: Be patient and stick with it. You may notice improvement within a couple of weeks. However, the bladder retraining period can take several months. Below are additional tips to help make your bladder training a success:

- Maintain a normal body weight. If you are overweight, losing a small amount of weight (even 10% of what you weigh) can help with bladder leakage. Extra weight can increase the urge to go.
- If you smoke, quit. Smoking can lead to lung problems, which make you cough often. Coughing can promote urinary leakage. Nicotine can also cause bladder spasms.
- Treat constipation. Constipation can make OAB and urine leakage worse.
- Learn about side effects of your medicines. Ask your provider if any of your prescribed or over-the-counter medicines might be worsening the gotta-go feeling. If so, discuss alternate options.
- Drink when you are thirsty, but do not overdrink. Drink only enough so that your urine is a light yellow color. Spread your drinks across the day to help control your need to urinate.
- Stop drinking two hours before you go to bed. This will help to decrease your need to get up during the night to use the bathroom.

Stop or limit any drinks that irritate your bladder. This can include drinks with alcohol and caffeine, artificial sweeteners or diet drinks.

Three Takeaways

1. **By exercising your bladder and pelvic floor muscles, you can help control the urge to urinate.**
2. **Bladder training is effective for many women—stick with your schedule and give yourself time to relearn when to respond to the need to go. This can mean you avoid medicines and surgery.**
3. **When done correctly, pelvic floor muscle exercises can help reduce or stop urine leakage. If you are unsure about your technique, ask for a referral to a pelvic floor physical therapist.**



Implementation of the Physical Activity Guidelines Through **Move Your Way**

The Physical Activity Guidelines is written for professional audiences. Therefore, its translation into actionable consumer messages and resources helps individuals, families, and communities achieve the recommendations in the Guidelines. The Move Your Way campaign was created by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to be used by communities, health professionals, educators, and others to communicate to consumers in plain language about the recommendations from the Guidelines, promote the health benefits of meeting the recommendations, and provide tips for how consumers can meet the recommendations.

Campaign resources, including interactive tools, fact sheets, videos, and graphics, are available at <https://www.health.gov/PAGuidelines/>.

Figure A-1. Move Your Way Adult Dosage



Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Positioning in Bed to Minimize Pressure

Use pillows to help keep bony areas from touching each other.

Alternate between the back, right side, and left side every two hours while you're awake.

Keep the bottom sheet free from wrinkles. Be sure to remove any crumbs and avoid placing items on the bed. Keep items on a bedside table.



When lying on the back. Place a pillow under the lower legs to keep the heels off the bed.



When lying on the side. Place a pillow between the knees and the arm on a pillow.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Prevention and Control of Lower Extremity Lymphedema

Check all areas of your legs and feet everyday for signs of problems such as swelling, hardness, a rash, itching, redness, pain, areas that feel hot, sores or cuts. Report concerns to your doctor.

Know the Early Signs of Edema (swelling)

Your toes, foot, ankle, leg, abdomen and/or (for men – genitals) feel tight or heavy. Your shoes feel tight.

Know the Signs of Cellulitis

Redness, swelling, tenderness, pain, warmth, fever

Protect Your Leg from Injury and Infection

Keep your legs and feet as clean as possible. Bath with a mild soap and water, dry gently particularly in skin folds and between your toes. See a podiatrist for nail care.

Protect your skin.

- Use a low pH lotion to keep your skin from drying or cracking.
- Use sunscreen and insect repellent when you are outside.
- If you shave your legs, use an electric razor.
- Avoid extreme hot or cold such as ice packs, heating pads and hot tubs.

Don't overtire your leg(s).

Don't cross your legs.

Elevate your affected extremity above the level of your heart whenever possible, particularly at night.

Do not allow an injection, blood draw or have your blood pressure taken in the affected leg(s).

Avoid clothes with tight bands at the waist or ankles. Wear shoes that do not constrict your feet. Avoid sandals, slippers or going barefoot

Wear a lymphedema alert bracelet, one can be ordered from the National Lymphedema Network (<http://www.lymphnet.org> or 1-800-541-3259).

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Prevention and Control of Upper Extremity Lymphedema

Check all areas of your arm(s) everyday for signs of problems such as swelling, hardness, a rash, itching, redness, pain, areas that feel hot, sores or cuts. Report concerns to your doctor.

Know the Early Signs of Edema

Your arm(s) feels tight and heavy.

Your jewelry and clothing feel tight.

Measure your arm(s) and compare to your baseline measurements

Protect Your Arm from Injury and Infection

Keep your arm(s) as clean as possible. Bath with a mild soap and water and dry Gently. Take care of your fingernails and avoid cutting your cuticles.

Protect your skin.

- Use a low pH lotion to keep your skin from drying or cracking.
- Use sunscreen and insect repellent when you are outside.
- Shave with an electric razor.
- Wear gloves when gardening, doing housework or using the oven.
- Avoid extreme hot or cold such as ice packs, heating pads and hot tubs.

Don't overtire your arm(s).

- Avoid vigorous repetitive movements such as scrubbing.
- Limit lifting to no more than 5 pounds.
- Don't carry heavy over-the-shoulder bags on your affected side(s).

Elevate your arm(s) above the level of your heart whenever possible, particularly at night.

Avoid have your blood pressure taken in the affected arm(s).

Wear loose jewelry and clothes without tight bands.

Do not allow an injection, blood draw or acupuncture in the affected arm(s)

You can order a lymphedema alert bracelet from the National Lymphedema Network (<http://www.lymphnet.org> or 1-800-541-3259).

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Pulmonary Exercises

Head Circles

Roll your head slowly from side to side. Do not roll your head back. Breathe evenly, in through your nose and out through pursed lips.

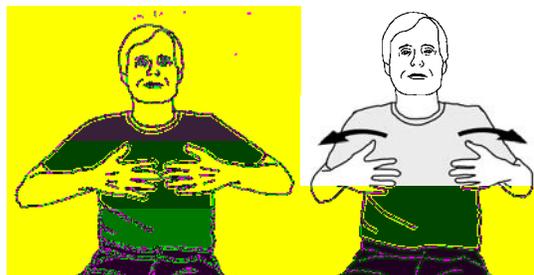
Complete _____ set(s) of _____



Elbow Breathing

Lift your elbows to shoulder level, and touch your fingertips in front of your chest. Inhale through your nose as you pull your elbows back. Exhale through pursed lips as you return to the original position.

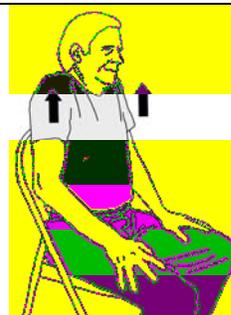
Complete _____ set(s) of _____



Shoulder Shrugs

Inhale through your nose as you shrug your shoulders. Exhale through pursed lips as you press your shoulders down.

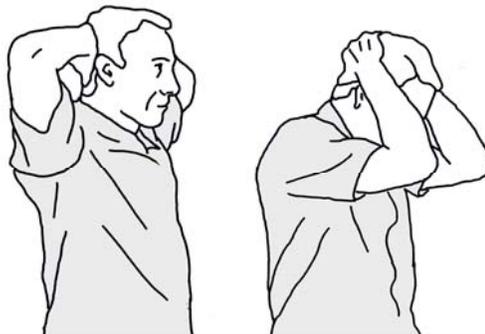
Complete _____ set(s) of _____



Spread Elbows

Place your hands behind your neck. Inhale through your nose as you spread your elbows apart. Exhale as you bring your elbows together and roll your neck and upper back down.

Complete _____ set(s) of _____



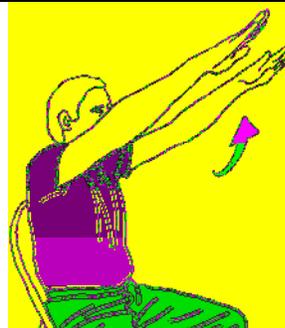
Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Pulmonary Exercises

Arm Raise

Inhale through your nose as you raise your arms up in front. Exhale through pursed lips as you return your arms to the side.

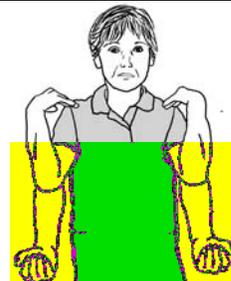
Complete _____ set(s) of _____



Arm Curl

Inhale through your nose as you bend your arms to touch the shoulders. Exhale through pursed lips as you straighten them.

Complete _____ set(s) of _____



Twist

Exhale through pursed lips as you reach across your body to the right. Inhale through your nose as you return to center.

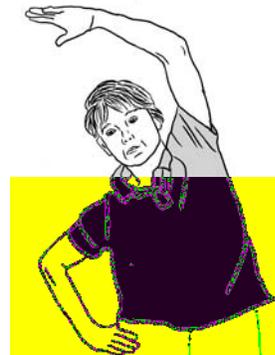
Complete _____ set(s) of _____
Repeat to the left side.



Side Bend

Exhale through pursed lips as you bend over to the right side. Inhale through your nose as you return upright.

Complete _____ set(s) of _____.
Repeat to the left side.



Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Pulmonary Exercises

Chair Push-Ups

Sit with feet flat on the floor and hands on the armrests. Exhale through pursed lips as you push up from the chair. Inhale through your nose as you lower back down.

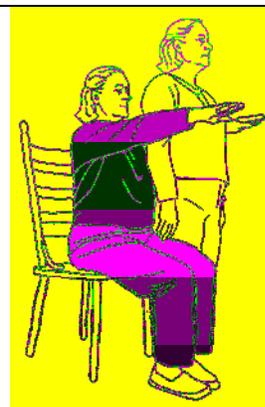
Complete _____ set(s) of _____



Stand Up and Sit Down

Keep your back straight and your arms extended out in front. Exhale through pursed lips as you stand up. Inhale through your nose as you sit down

Complete _____ set(s) of _____



Wall Push-Up

Place two hands on the wall. Inhale through your nose as you slowly lower your body toward the wall. Exhale through pursed lips as you push out by straightening your elbows.

Complete _____ set(s) of _____



Quarter Squat

Stand and hold onto a stable object. Exhale through pursed lips as you slightly bend your knees and lower down. Inhale through your nose as you straighten up.

Complete _____ set(s) of _____



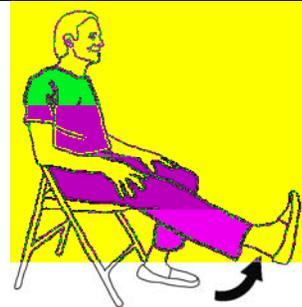
Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Pulmonary Exercises

Knee Extension

Sit in a chair. Exhale through pursed lips as you straighten your right knee by tightening your thigh muscle. Inhale through your nose as you lower your leg.

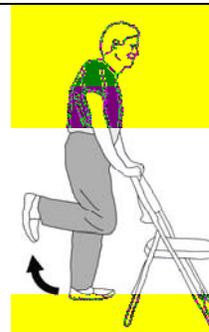
Complete _____ set(s) of _____
Repeat with the left leg.



Knee Curl

Stand and hold onto a stable object. Exhale through pursed lips as you bend your right knee up behind you. Inhale through your nose as you lower your leg.

Complete _____ set(s) of _____
Repeat with the left leg.



Hip Abduction

Stand and hold onto a stable object. Exhale through pursed lips as you lift your right leg out to the side. Inhale through your nose as you lower your leg.

Complete _____ set(s) of _____
Repeat with the left leg.



Toe Raises

Stand and hold onto a stable object. Exhale through pursed lips as you rise up on your toes. Inhale through your nose as you lower down.

Complete _____ set(s) of _____



Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Pursed Lip Breathing

Pursed lip breathing is the key to gaining control over your breathing. It will help you to empty your lungs of stale air and maximize the amount of oxygen you breathe in.

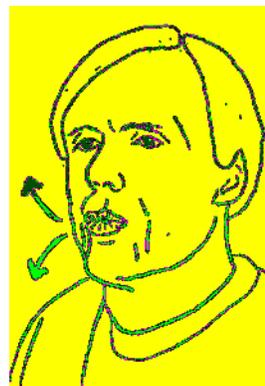
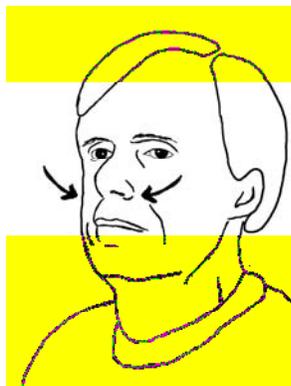
The rationale behind pursed lip breathing is that breathing into the nose warms, filters and humidifies the air and increases relaxation. Blowing out through pursed lips provides a resistance to the airflow at the level of the mouth. This increases pressure in the lungs keeping them open longer and allowing more oxygen to be used by the lungs.

Use pursed lip breathing with activities that make you short of breath, such as when exercising, bending, lifting, or climbing stairs. If you're already short of breath, use pursed lip breathing to help you regain control of your breathing.

Instructions:

1. Relax your neck and shoulder muscles.
2. Breathe in slowly through your nose as if smelling a flower.
3. Purse your lips as if you were going to cool off a hot liquid. Let the air escape naturally. Do not force the air out of your lungs.
4. You should exhale twice as long as you inhale.

For a visual reminder to help you use this technique, use a rubber band to attach the stem of a silk flower to a spoon. Place the flower and spoon in a location where you will see it frequently.



Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Recreational Ideas

Recreation

Use large print playing cards.

Play games such as checkers, chess, dominoes, bingo, Parcheesi, or Braille Scrabble.

Listen to the radio, TV or music.

Enjoy books and magazines on tape, in large print or in Braille. They are available from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Participate in community programs for senior citizens, such as weekly meals or entertainment programs.

Go bowling, swimming, hiking, fishing, tandem bike riding and dancing.

Learn a new craft, such as clay sculpture, tile or mosaics.

Reduce Glare

Hang sheer curtains, blinds, or light filtering shades that allow light through.

Use only matte, not polished, finishes on furniture or floors.

Use shades on all lamps.

When outdoors, wear a visor or a hat with a wide brim. Wear UV fit-overs on eyeglasses.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Respiratory Panic and Distress Control Technique

Sometimes respiratory panic is unavoidable. Begin to apply this technique when you have the first symptoms of shortness of breath and anxiety.

Instructions:

1. Stay calm.
2. Sit down if you can.
3. Lean forward. This will help you to relax your shoulders and expand your diaphragm.
4. Begin pursed lip breathing, try to exhale as long as possible.
5. Attempt diaphragmatic breathing and relaxation exercises.

If respiratory panic or distress does not decrease after trying these techniques, call your physician for advice.



Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Low Vision - Safety Tips

Safety Tips

Establish and maintain a safe arrangement of furniture and personal belongings.

Keep items in consistent places.

Keep doors open completely.

Keep chairs tight up against table.

Keep cupboard drawers and doors closed.

Remove throw rugs or secure with backing.

Keep hallways and stairs free and clear of hazards.

Attach small piece of sandpaper to handrail near top and bottom of steps to warn of end.

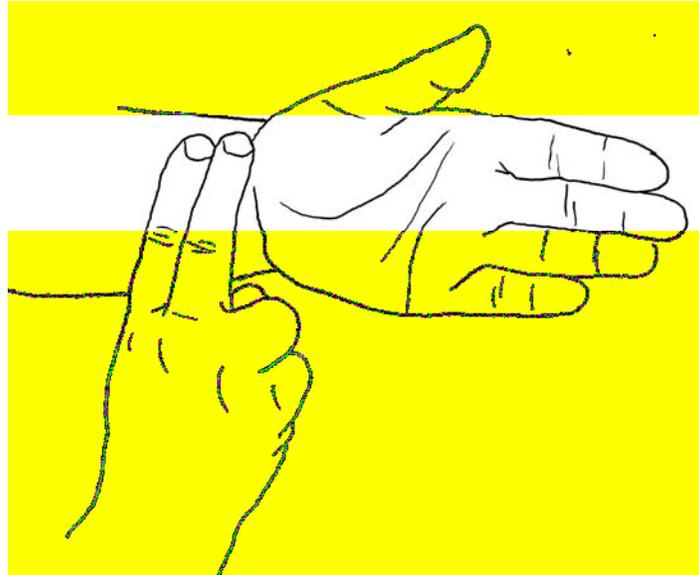
Install a safety gate or door on open stairways.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Self-Monitoring Your Heart Rate

How to Take Your Pulse

Turn your hand over, palm side up. Place 2 fingers from your other hand at the base of the thumb.



Feel your pulse by pressing lightly in the little groove.

Watch a clock with a second hand. The number of times you feel your heart beat in one minute is your heart rate. Count for 15 seconds and multiply by 4 if your pulse is regular. If it is irregular, count the pulse for a full minute.

When doing aerobic or endurance conditioning, keep your heart rate between 60% and 80% for the best benefit.

Age	Target Heart Rate	
	60%	80%
60	96	128
65	93	124
70	90	120
75	87	116
80	84	112
85	81	108
90	78	104

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Skin Inspection

Check your skin often during the day if you are in bed or in a chair most of the time. Look for areas of redness over bony places.

Back of the head

Elbows

Lower back

Tailbone

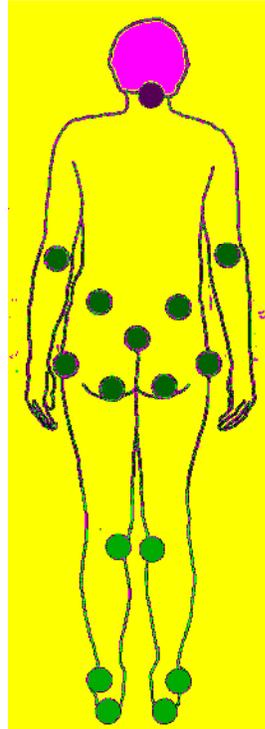
Base of the buttocks

Hips

Inner knees

Outer ankles

Heels



If you need help, have another person check your skin each day or use a long handled mirror.

Avoid massage over bony parts like the hips, tailbone, shoulders and ankles.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques

What Causes Stress?

- Major events
Injury, illness, moving, death of someone close to you.
- Everyday life events
Disagreements, waiting for others, not sleeping well, meeting new people, being late, feeling bored, having too much to do.

Identify the Causes of Your Stress

- Keep a log of stressful events that occur in your life for 2 weeks.

Recognize How Stress Affects You

- Physical signs
Fatigue, nightmares, tightness of the neck and shoulder muscles, headaches, high blood pressure, digestive problems, chest pain, irregular heartbeat.
- Mental signs
Memory problems, difficulty making decisions, inability to concentrate, negative thinking, racing thoughts, poor judgment, loss of objectivity.
- Emotional signs
Restlessness, anxiety, depression, anger and resentment, easily irritated, overwhelmed, lack of confidence, apathy.
- Behavioral signs
Eating more or less, sleeping too much or too little, nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing), teeth grinding or jaw clenching, losing your temper, overreacting to unexpected problems.

How to Cope with Stress

- Prevent or avoid the situation.
- Change as much of the situation as possible.
- Change your response to the situation.
 - Learn to accept what cannot be changed.
 - Talk about worries and frustrations.
 - Take one thing at a time; learn to prioritize and manage time.

Occupational Therapy TOOLKIT

Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques

Taking Care of Yourself So You Can Handle Stress Better

- Talk to someone about your feelings.
- Eat a well-balanced diet.
- Exercise that includes stretching, strengthening and cardiovascular.
- Get enough sleep.
- Balance self-care and work with recreation.
- Do something nice for yourself every day.

Practice Relaxation and Stress Reduction Activities

- Controlled breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Guided imagery
- Self-hypnosis
- Meditation
- Prayer
- Tai Chi
- Yoga
- Listening to music.
- Looking at a pleasant scene or piece of art.

Low Vision - Using Contrast

Use Contrasting Colors to Distinguish Items From the Background

Select a toilet seat that is a different color than that of the floor color.

Choose a colored tub mat for a white tub. Place one on the bottom of the tub and drape one over the tub edge to make it easier to see.

Choose soap and shampoo that have colors that contrast from those of the tub and sink areas.

Choose a bright bedspread that contrasts with the floor.

Choose the colors of your kitchenware to contrast against the background color.

Outline the edges of countertops, steps, coffee tables, doorways, doorsills, switch plates and bathtubs with colored plumbers tape.