

Ground Game Check-Up Time

BY DAYNA STODDART



Our body and abilities adapt to what we do or what we don't do.

Our environment drives movement and movement drives function. When we shrink our movement sphere, we shrink our function, well-being, quality of life and longevity.

My motto is: exercise is powerful medicine. My mission is to inspire, motivate, support and empower baby boomers and older adults to be physically active. It is my passion to advocate and promote movement that encompasses all aspects of fitness as a health promotion and disease prevention strategy. This supports well-being in order to enhance the quality of life and vitality! Physical activity is an integral part of the prevention and treatment of chronic disease in the Canadian health care system. Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend you accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic training five to seven days per week; practise strength training two to three times per week, and engage in balance training and stretching daily.

The saying, "We don't stop exercising because we grow old, we grow old because we stop exercising," by Dr. Kenneth Cooper could not be more accurate or true.

Falling is not part of aging. Lack of or loss of mobility, range of motion in our joints, strength, core stability and balance, along with polypharmacy (multiple medications and their side effects) and fear of falling all play a role in loss of function and increase the risk of falls. Lost



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confidence from a near fall, and the fear of falling can be more limiting than the fall itself.

If you are not forced to the ground by doing hobbies, chores and training, do you go there? If you have not been down on the floor in years, can you still get there? Or if you unintentionally end up there, can you get back up?

Unless our daily activities and routines require a variety of movements and positions, including getting down on the floor (ground game), it is in our best interest to create and choose opportunities to preserve them or earn them back.

Try this – the ground game check-up:

Choose an appropriate surface. Note - do not self-inflict pain or injury just to prove you can do it.

Score yourself.

YES (1 point): I did it automatically with ease;

NO: I struggled, felt pain, had to think too much.

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|----------------------|---|
| <input type="text"/> | 1. Get down on the floor, using zero to two points of contact (hands/knees), in control. No plopping! |
| <input type="text"/> | 2. Sit cross-legged for 15 seconds without hunching. |
| <input type="text"/> | 3. Un-cross your legs and crawl forward and backward six times in each direction. |
| <input type="text"/> | 4. Lay on back with arms overhead. |
| <input type="text"/> | 5. Roll right onto belly, roll back. |
| <input type="text"/> | 6. Roll left onto belly, roll back. |
| <input type="text"/> | 7. Sit up. |
| <input type="text"/> | 8. Stand back up, using zero to two points of contact. |

TOTAL SCORE

Tally your score.

8 = holding your own.

4-7 = some kinks in the chain of movement. Time to expand your movement sphere!

0-3 = multiple kinks in the chain. But it's never too late to start the re-learning journey; be sure to ease back in.

If you scored an 8, KEEP the ability! Lay on the floor. Sit and crouch in a variety of ways; cross-legged is not mandatory. At home, do physical chores inside and outdoors that force you to crouch, kneel, sit on the ground, and get up and down. KEEP doing those jobs like scrubbing the floor, detailing the car and gardening.

If you scored 0-7, expand your movement sphere. Join me for the seven weekly complimentary wellness classes (six are virtual and one is in-person at the Recreation Centre) that address mindfulness to improve cognition and manage stress; promote joint health; improve posture and body awareness to allow our organs to function optimally; improve core strength, stability and balance; improve functional strength, bone density, heart and brain health; improve flexibility in our muscles for more ease of movement and decreased risk of injuries.

BE WELL AND THRIVE!