

BE ACTIVE - WARMING UP FOR YOUR DAILY LIFE!

This poster is for practitioners who provide physical activity opportunities to older adults. It is a tool that can be put up in any activity space to remind leaders and participants of how daily exercise can prevent falls, maintain strength and balance, and prepare the body to move.

The warm up portion of any physical activity is very important for all participants but is especially important for older adults. Generally, a warm up for older adults should be 10-15 minutes of a one hour activity opportunity and should include a variety of activities that prepare the body for movement. A warm up is appropriate not just for an exercise class or group activities, but prior to other activities like gardening, doing housework, shovelling, raking, or going for a walk. This warm up routine can be done anytime of the day: first thing in the morning, before going for a walk, or any time that it can be fit in. The great part about this routine is that it also improves strength and balance, which can help to prevent falls!

When providing physical activity opportunities to older adults, leaders can consider these points:

Set Up Your Venue

- Use a safe, clutter-free space.
- Have a wall or sturdy chairs for support and balance.

Focus on the ABC's: Alignment, Breathing, Control

- Remind participants to think about their body alignment, posture and engaging their core as they exercise.
- Cue participants to continue to breathe throughout all exercises.
- Encourage slow and controlled movements.

Progression and Duration

- Start with 4 repetitions and increase to 12 as participants progress.
- Hold balance exercises for 10 -15 seconds per side.

Modify to Suit Your Participants

- Participants will have different abilities. Ensure you are aware of how to choose activities that meet the needs of your participants.
- Have options for activity modifications prepared to meet the participants desired level of challenge.
- Ensure participants move at their own pace/speed/ability.

Looking for more training on activity for older adults? Look for workshops and courses provided by: the Physical Culture Association of Alberta, the Alberta Fitness Leadership Certification Association, or your local Alberta Be Fit For Life Centre.

Looking for more ideas on using activity to prevent falls? Go to findingbalancealberta.ca for more information and resources on challenging balance and building strength to prevent falls.

