

The Balance Bulletin

Prevention strategies for staying healthy and active

Balance plays key role in active aging

- Maintaining a healthy cholesterol level
- Watching your weight
- Protecting your bones and heart
- Keeping your mind active and engaged
- Eating healthy foods
- Enjoying the company of family and friends

These are just a few of the well-proven, scientifically-supported strategies for staying healthy and active during all phases of life – but become even more important as we age. Another critical element required for a healthy lifestyle is missing from this list: **ensuring that we have and maintain good balance.**

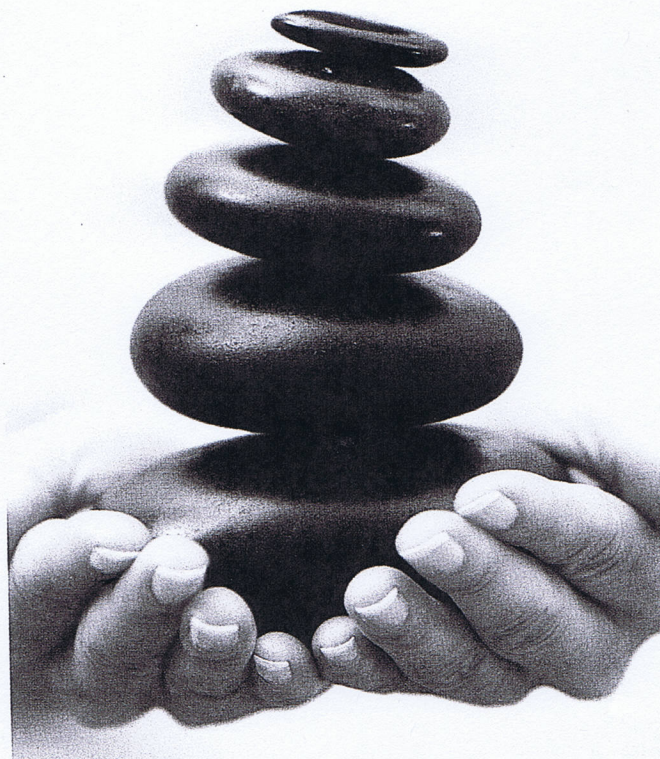
Yes, maintaining a strong, healthy, confident sense of physical balance is just as important as a low LDL level, managing your diabetes, and tackling crossword and Sudoku puzzles to keep your mind sharp. Good balance is something most people don't think about – until they don't have it. And then it is capable of affecting every aspect of their lives.

Having poor balance reduces your ability to drive a car, walk down the sidewalk, do your own grocery shopping, handle simple household chores, or even get out of bed without an increased likelihood of falling.

But the good news is that there are clinically proven, effective tools at your disposal to make sure you maintain a good, healthy balance through all phases of your life. The two most important strategies are...

Good balance is something most people don't think about – until they don't have it.

**...getting a balance assessment
and prevention.**



Add balance assessment to regular medical screenings

Most of us know that regular health screenings – mammograms, prostate exams, colonoscopies, bone density scans and others – are an important component of remaining healthy from age 40 or 50 until much older. They're regarded as essential, routine, preventive care.

Now, with NeuroCom solutions, there's one additional health screening that can test the limits of balance and motor control and provide an assessment of the underlying factors causing any problems.

There are compelling reasons for active agers in particular to add this important, painless and simple test to the list of preventive good health strategies.

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Frequency of falling

- Falls are the leading cause of injury-related visits to the emergency room for people over the age of 65.
- Falls accounting for 70 percent of accidental deaths in people over age 75.
- Fear of falling is the No. 1 concern of the elderly.
- Older adults who fall once are 2-3 times as likely to fall again within a year.

source: onbalance.com

Exercise + good balance = healthy aging

The evidence is clear that exercise supports healthy aging, mental acuity and independent living. It also has been shown to reduce the impact of chronic health conditions. Healthy physical activity is an important component in the quest to preserve cognitive function, promote longer disability-free life expectancy, and improve physical functioning into old age.

Even with such clear evidence, it can be difficult to begin or continue an exercise routine when barriers such as balance instability, mobility impairments, or feeling dizzy and lightheaded are part of your life. That's why it's important to take preventive steps to maintain good balance. Aging adults should talk to their physician or health care provider about getting a baseline assessment – using innovative balance systems and technology.

This assessment is designed to provide a clear view of a person's current balance abilities and provide scientific, objective data to use as a comparison as one ages or begins experiencing any balance-related issues. Getting a preventive, baseline balance assessment is easy – thanks to scientifically-based technology developed by NeuroCom® International, Inc., the world leader in balance assessments and rehabilitation.

Once a balance problem is addressed in this fashion, age-appropriate activities such as walking, swimming, hiking, golfing, weight lifting, yoga, or tennis may be enjoyed once again.

"Add balance assessment"

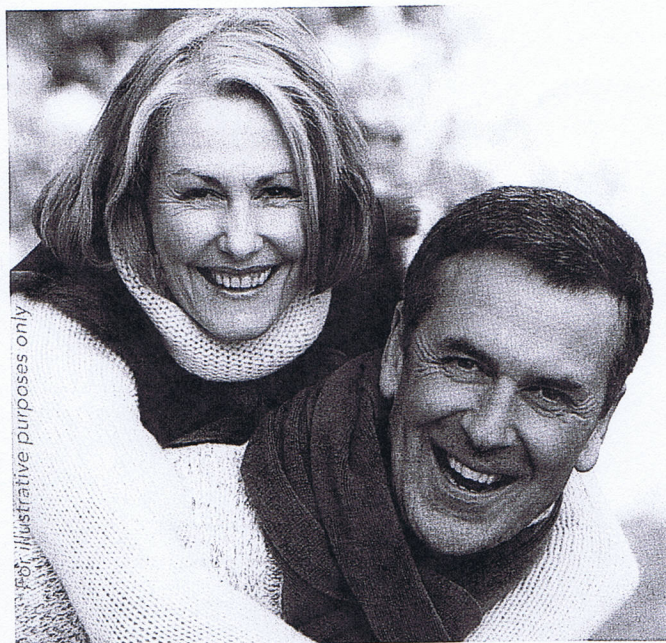
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Technically advanced assessments for balance and fall risk are essential components for maintenance of healthy, active aging. Remarkably accurate and incisive state-of-the-art technology systems can provide critically important early identification of a balance or risk-to-fall problem. If the balance assessment indicates a problem, a physician and physical therapist can then develop a highly individualized, customized and effective treatment plan.

So...you want to be an astronaut?

Well, maybe you can't be a real astronaut, but you can benefit from advanced technology for balance assessments and treatments that was developed in conjunction with NASA to test balance in astronauts. Developed by NeuroCom International, Inc., this state-of-the-art technology can target where, how and in what situations you may feel you're losing your balance or are at risk to fall.

The technology is known as Computerized Dynamic Posturography, or CDP, which was developed by NeuroCom, the industry leader in the balance and mobility field since 1984. This NeuroCom technology is available at select hospitals, physician offices, continuous care retirement communities, and dedicated balance



for illustrative purposes only

program facilities. More than 2,000 locations worldwide are using NeuroCom technology to provide physicians, audiologists, physical therapists and patients with accurate assessments leading to effective treatment of the sensory and motor risk factors that are at the center of balance issues.

"NeuroCom provides clear documented evidence that focuses on a patient's balance and mobility problems," said Jon F. Peters, PhD, vice president and general manager of NeuroCom. "You can determine the nature of the problem by demonstrating that a person has excellent balance control at times with the exception of a problem in a particular sensory system. That one problem can cause the whole balance system to be dysfunctional."

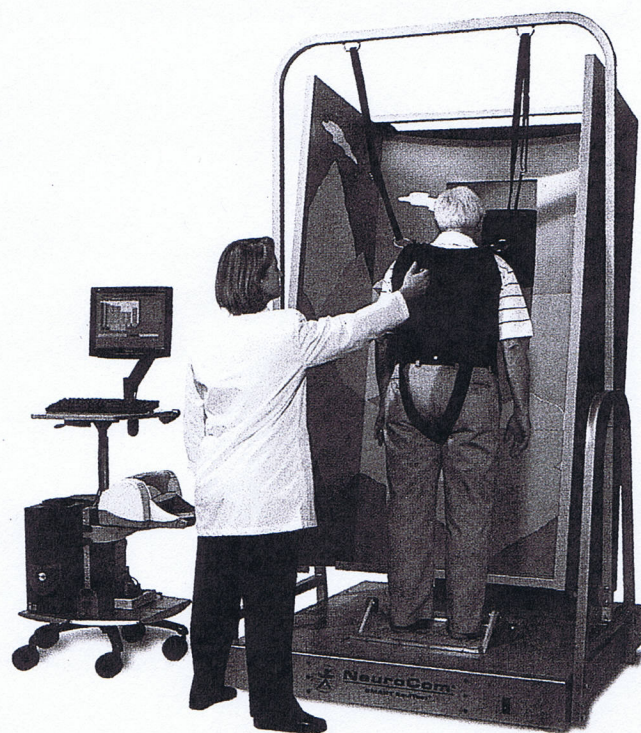
When being tested on a NeuroCom SMART EquiTest® system, patients stand on a dynamic (moveable) force plate that moves gently under the feet, providing a motion similar to walking on an uneven surface in real life. It also incorporates a moveable surround and specialized computer-based technology designed to target balance issues within a variety of factors relating to the senses, the brain's ability to process information, and the ability of muscle systems and joints to maintain balance.

This system can provide immediate information about where, and in what situations, someone may experience a balance problem. The human body's balance mechanisms are complex and can be very subtle – making it difficult to accurately describe what it feels like to be out of balance. NeuroCom technology offers objective, scientific and evidence-based data about someone's balance or risk-to-fall problem. This offers the clinical expert much more information than just the patient's description of the severity of the problem or in what situation it typically occurs.

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Sobering news about falls

It's not unusual for patients dealing with imbalance, instability or dizziness to see multiple physicians over time without discovering a cure for their symptoms. This is because many of these



Preventive screening with NeuroCom

symptoms are found within a wide variety of diseases, and historically a clear treatment path has been difficult to achieve. While there is no standard timeline, anecdotal evidence points to the fact that many balance-impaired patients visit between two to four physicians, visit the ER sometimes multiple times, complete an imaging series and may even be treated for psychiatric issues during a three-to-five-year period without gaining an understanding of the root cause of their problems.

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Frequency of balance disorders

- The incidence of balance impairments is expected to increase substantially as the population ages.
- About 90 million Americans will report bouts of dizziness at some point in their lives.
- About 65 percent of people over age 60 experience balance issues.
- A balance or mobility impairment can be related to a range of issues, including: Parkinson's disease, osteoporosis, multiple sclerosis, brain injuries, neuropathy, stroke, dizziness, vertigo, joint replacement, sports injuries and others.

source: onbalance.com



Balance issues can cause healthy agers to restrict their activities -regular balance screenings are critical for a healthy lifestyle.

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One thing known for certain, according to the Agency for Health Care Administration, is that falls are the leading cause of injury-related visits to the emergency room for people over the age of 65. In addition, falls are a critical factor in 70 percent of the accidental deaths in people over the age of 75.

The cycle continues once an older adult has a falling episode, with additional falls two or three times within a year. So these older adults are faced with the physical result of the actual falls -- plus the debilitating fear of falling that creates additional stress and uncertainty. Being afraid of falling can easily become a vicious circle that leads to more falls and a decline in health and well being. People who are afraid of falling are much less motivated to participate in any type of physical activity. This lack of physical movement actually decreases their ability to tolerate movement.

Breakthroughs in the assessment and treatment of balance-related issues provided by NeuroCom's innovative balance systems offer effective and relatively inexpensive tools for identifying balance impairments and fall risks. Many other assessment tools currently used when falls and balance issues persist, such as MRI and CT scans, frequently aren't as effective at isolating complex balance issues. When armed with targeted assessments provided by NeuroCom's technology, physicians and physical therapists can customize their diagnosis and therapy. Many times they can resolve the balance impairment symptoms with a 98 percent recovery rate, according to Kevi Ames, a physical therapist in Portland, Oregon, who specializes in balance disorders.

Staying a step ahead with a dedicated balance program

There are literally hundreds of balance programs in the United States and around the world that use the family of balance assessment and management systems available from NeuroCom. These dedicated balance programs have been proven to show exceptional results for patients, medical professionals, private practices, veteran and military hospitals, and the community in general.

A multidisciplinary balance program can provide patients with superior results and positive clinical outcomes. For health care professionals, a successful balance program offers these and other benefits:

- Improves the coordination and provision of care
- Improves your relationship with the area's medical community
- Creates a marketable service line
- Differentiates you and your affiliated hospital from the competition
- Provides significant revenue potential
- Requires minimal start-up costs

"Having the NeuroCom equipment has completely changed my practice," said Gina Sauro, physical therapist and supervisor of outpatient physical therapy at New York Presbyterian Hospital. "I don't know if I could ever practice again without it. It's as close as therapists can get to diagnosing impairment. It objectifies a balance problem...and then is invaluable in helping us know when to discharge."

NeuroCom can help you develop the clinical, technical and program components of your balance center. Please visit our website at onbalance.com or contact us at 1-800-767-6744.

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