

Inclusion Criteria for Program Registrations

As a general rule, falls prevention program registrations will be accepted and posted if they match the criteria in ALL THREE areas listed below. However, each registration will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. All decisions will be at the discretion of COAW. Please note that COAW reserves the right to amend this Inclusion Criteria at any time without notice.

Rationale or Background:

This website is committed to promoting evidence-based programs that are known to reduce falls and the risk of falls in the older adult population. Research has shown that exercise programs that challenge balance and provide an adequate dose of exercise time have the greatest effect on preventing falls in older people. In addition, evidence-based multifaceted programs that include exercise (such as the education/exercise programs of Stepping On and Matter of Balance) are also effective.

Balance exercises should challenge participants in these categories:

- Reduce the base of support (e.g. standing with both feet close together, standing tandem or on one leg),
- Move the center of gravity, controlling the body's position while standing and moving (e.g. reaching safety, transferring body weight from one leg to the other, stepping over obstacles).
- Exercises are done in standing position, without using arms for support. If this is not possible, the aim should be to decrease the reliance on arm support. Chairs should be available as the student progresses and for safety.
- Gait training (e.g. walking on toes/heels, side stepping, walking at increased pace, managing an obstacle course)
- All balance and gait exercises are progressively challenging over the course of the exercise class, being tailored to the individual's needs and capabilities.

Lower leg strength is also a necessary part of balance. Fall prevention exercise programs may include strength exercises such as knee raises, side leg raises, heel raises, stepping on to a step, and sit-to-stand exercises. Exercises done on the floor or extensive upper body exercises (while valuable for older adults) are not considered essential for fall prevention.

Many exercise programs are designed for older adults and may address cardiovascular fitness, flexibility, strength, as well as balance. However, this registry will only accept those classes and programs that comply with the evidence-base for fall prevention. At this time we will not be listing classes such as yoga, seated exercise programs, walking or swimming programs or exercise programs that provide less than 50% of the time doing balance-challenging exercises (see above).

The following evidence-based programs are automatically accepted as meeting Criteria One. The classes must also meet the other two criteria for class time and instructor background.

Exercise programs

Tai Chi:Moving For Better Balance

**Moving For Better Balance
Tai Chi for Arthritis
N'Balance**

**Education/exercise programs
Stepping On
Matter of Balance**

If you are interested in submitting any other classes, or variations in style, time or duration of an existing class structure, for consideration of listing in this registry, please provide information on how the class meets the following three criteria. Please submit the information directly to Lynnzy McIntosh

Criteria One: Specific balance challenging exercises

Research indicated that effective fall prevention programs are designed to progressively challenge the balance of participants. For consideration in this registry, at least 50% of overall class time needs to be spent undertaking balance exercises in the specific balance exercise categories listed above.

Criteria Two: duration and dose

Research studies show the best results for older adults who participate in 50 hours or more of exercise. While this dose of hours is not common with one class, it is a goal to be emphasized to the older adults in each class. For the specific exercise programs, this registry recommends twice a week sessions with each session lasting 45 to 60 minutes, and the class scheduled for 10 or 12 weeks. If a class is scheduled for less than 10 weeks, please provide information on how participants will be encouraged to take additional classes in order to receive an adequate dose of fall prevention exercises. For the education/exercise programs, the exercise component should follow the required curriculum. Program information and guidance on the evidence-based curriculums are available at <https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/falls-prevention-programs-for-older-adults/>

Criteria Three: provider/instructor background

The specific evidence-based programs (listed above) provide a training program and certification for instructors. This registry will require that the instructors obtain and maintain a certification. For other programs, the instructors must submit details on licensures, fitness instructor training, and experience working with older adults.

These inclusion criteria were established based on the following resources:

- Sherrington C, Whitney JC, Lord SR, Herbert RD, Cumming RG, Close JC. Effective exercise for the prevention of falls: a systematic review and meta-analysis), Journal of the American Geriatrics Society 2008 Dec; 56(12):2234-43. doi: 10.1111/j.1532-5415.2008.02014.
- Sherrington C, Tiedemann A, Fairhall N, Close JC, Lord SR. Exercise to prevent falls in older adults: an updated meta-analysis and best practice recommendations. N S W Public

Health Bull. 2011 Jun;22(3-4):78-83. doi: 10.1071/NB10056. Available at <http://www.phrp.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/NB10056.pdf>

- CDC Compendium of Effective Fall Interventions: What Works for Community-Dwelling Older Adults, 2nd Edition at <http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/compendium.html>
- National Council on Aging, Center for Healthy Aging provides information on evidence-based programming. <https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/falls-prevention-programs-for-older-adults/>