

1 in 4 older adults in the U.S. have reported a fall, this adds up to 29 million falls annually

24% of those falls required medical treatment

Contrary to popular belief, this is a preventable problem

Falling is not a normal part of the aging process

As we age, we tend to lose muscle strength and our nerves transmit information to and from our brain at a slower speed, increasing the risk for a fall

Balance can be improved through physical therapy

If you or a loved one have one of the following diagnoses, consider calling one of our balance and fall prevention specialists for a balance assessment:

- Peripheral Neuropathy
- Low Blood Pressure
- Geriatric Depression
- Osteoporosis
- Mild Cognitive Impairment
- Parkinson's Disease
- Multiple Sclerosis



Kitsap Physical Therapy offers the balance and fall prevention program at all of our 7 locations. All specialists are trained in evidence-based protocols and treatment. The focus of the training is to facilitate optimal aging for older adults to keep them safe and independent at home and in the community.

Our Goal:

Through exercise and education, assist in optimal aging for people in our community in order that they may be physically, socially, and mentally active to better enjoy life:

- Reduce fall risk and fear of falling
- Improving mobility, balance and movement
- Improving activity and community engagement

Bainbridge Island (206) 842-6288

Bremerton (360) 792-1015

Kingston (360) 297-7050

Port Orchard (360) 895-9090

Poulsbo-NKMC (360) 779-3764

Poulsbo-Village (360) 779-3777

Silverdale (360) 613-1834



kitsap
physical
therapy
AND SPORTS CLINICS

Balance and Fall Prevention

An evidence-based balance and fall prevention program

Physical Therapy

Physical therapy will typically involve sessions 2-3 times a week for 4-8 weeks. The initial evaluation involves a discussion of medical and fall history, strength testing, and standardized testing to determine fall risk.

Treatment sessions will include:

Exercise

Muscle strengthening: We use functional exercises that will improve your ability to get out of lower chairs, go up stairs, and get up from the ground safely.

Proprioception exercises: Ever feel like your legs don't do what you want them to? Proprioception refers to your awareness of your body parts in space as you move. Poor proprioception significantly increases risk of falling, and is very common with conditions like peripheral neuropathy. See a physical therapist to have your proprioception assessed, and learn if proprioception exercises can help you!

Aerobic conditioning: Individualized conditioning programs focus on keeping your heart healthy and decreasing your fatigue, so you can keep up with your grandchildren and great grandchildren!

'Knowledge is Power'

Our balance and fall prevention specialists are experts at identifying the safety concerns in your environment. Come ask them about:

- Proper footwear
- Making your home environment safer
- Appropriate use of your cane or walker
- How other medical conditions may be affecting your balance

Medication

Do you know if your medications are increasing your risk of falling? Our balance and fall prevention specialists are trained to screen your medication list for interactions that may be increasing your risk of falling. We recommend regular medication reviews with your physician or pharmacist.

The following medications are linked to falls:

- Blood Pressure Medications
- Sleep Aids
- Some Antidepressants
- Some Allergy Medications
- Muscle Relaxants
- Pain Medications

Circle "Yes" or "No" for each statement below

Why it matters

Yes (2)	No (0)	Statement	Why it matters
Yes (2)	No (0)	I have fallen in the past year.	People who have fallen once are likely to fall again.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely.	People who have been advised to use a cane or walker may already be more likely to fall.
Yes (2)	No (0)	Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking.	Unsteadiness or needing support while walking are signs of poor balance.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.	This is also a sign of poor balance.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I am worried about falling.	People who are worried about falling are more likely to fall.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.	This is a sign of weak leg muscles, a major reason for falling.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb.	This is also a sign of weak leg muscles.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I often have to rush to the toilet.	Rushing to the bathroom, especially at night, increases your chance of falling.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I have lost some feeling in my feet.	Numbness in your feet can cause stumbles and lead to falls.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light-headed or more tired than usual.	Side effects from medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood.	These medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I often feel sad or depressed.	Symptoms of depression, such as not feeling well or feeling slowed down are linked to falls.

Add up the number of points for each "yes" answer. If you scored 4 points or more, you may be at risk. Contact one of KPT's balance and fall prevention specialists with your results for a FREE screening and recommendations to help you stay independent and active for life.

This checklist was developed by the Greater Los Angeles VA Geriatric Research Education Clinical Center and affiliates and is a validated fall risk self-assessment tool (Rubenstein et al. J Safety Res; 2011:42(6)493-499). Adapted with permission of the authors.