

Appendix 4 (as supplied by the authors): Exercise for falls prevention

Rationale for exercise: To improve balance, muscle strength and coordination.

Provider: Physiotherapist or other health professional

Mode: Can be done individually or in a group. Initially delivered face-to-face with some tailoring of exercises to the individual's abilities and any other health conditions.

Where: At home, or a health or community venue

Materials needed: None for balance exercises; weights or bands for resistance exercise

Procedure: The Otago exercise program¹ is an example of an effective intervention. It involves a tailored program of simple exercises designed to enhance balance and strength taught to older people in 4 home visits <http://www.acc.co.nz/publications>. Group based Tai Chi and multi-component exercise (e.g. including balance, strength and fitness training) have also been found to be effective. Targeting balance appears to be a key component of effective interventions².

Number of exercise sessions: Exercise needs to be ongoing or the benefits will be lost.

Schedule details: At least 2 sessions per week. Can be a combination of group and home exercises.

Duration and intensity of each session: Each session should go for about 30-60 minutes and feel 'challenging but safe'.

References

1. Robertson MC, Campbell AJ, Gardner MM, et al. Preventing injuries in older people by preventing falls: a meta-analysis of individual-level data. *J Am Geriatr Soc* 2002;50:905-11.
2. Sherrington C, Tiedemann A, Fairhall N, et al. Exercise to prevent falls in older adults: an updated meta-analysis and best practice recommendations. *N S W Public Health Bull* 2011;22:78-83.