

# Get Moving

## Facilitator Guide



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# Get Moving

## Facilitator Guide



Dear Instructors,

The MSU Extension Nutrition and Physical Activity team is committed to enhancing physical activity offerings by integrating the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans into our direct education health and nutrition classes. As part of this initiative—and in alignment with SNAP-Ed requirements for Community Nutrition Instructors (CNIs) to include 5-10 minutes of physical activity in their programming—we’ve developed these six lessons to support both instructors and participants.

Our goal is to deliver clear, consistent messaging that aligns with the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. We aim to provide our CNIs with the confidence and resources needed to champion physical activity within our communities.

## Rationale for Teaching Physical Activity Guidelines

As community nutrition instructors, you play a pivotal role in shaping the health behaviors of your participants. Incorporating physical activity education alongside nutrition, supports a holistic approach to health.

Regular physical activity contributes to a healthy weight, reduces the risk of chronic diseases, and improves mental health. Sharing these guidelines with participants equips them with the knowledge to make informed decisions, fostering long-term healthy habits. Moreover, understanding that all movement counts—whether it's structured exercise or daily activities like household chores—makes physical activity more accessible and less intimidating, encouraging participants of all fitness levels to get involved.

## Know Your Audience

As you guide your participants through these activities, remember that we each have unique abilities and potential barriers to physical activity, such as child care, limited time, or income restraints. Additionally, those with marginalized identities may avoid fitness activities and spaces for a variety of reasons.

Physical activity, especially in group settings, can feel intimidating. Remain encouraging while modeling respect to ensure your participants feel physically and emotionally safe. Watch for hesitancy and use language that communicates to participants that they can decide what's best for their bodies during group movements, such as:

- "This next movement is available if it feels steady."
- "It's perfectly fine to pause or modify at any point."
- "Let your body decide how much is enough right now, or if this exercise is right for you."
- "Feel free to take notes and try this movement later in a private setting."

## Structure of Each Facilitator Lesson

To help make the lessons engaging and relatable, we've structured each one to be both informative and interactive. This structure ensures the material is presented in a way that is accessible, functional, and directly tied to participants' daily lives.

Here's a breakdown of the key sections of each lesson:



**Key Teaching Point:** The central message or concept that participants should learn and remember. This sets the foundation for the lesson.



**The Hook:** A way to grab participants' attention right at the start. This could be a question, an interesting fact, or a relatable scenario that sparks curiosity about the lesson.



**Why This Matters:** This section connects the key teaching point to participants' lives by explaining why the topic is relevant and how it can impact their health and well-being. It answers the question, "Why should I care?"



**Check Your Knowledge/Participant Voice:** In this section, we encourage active participation by prompting questions or discussions. This allows participants to reflect on what they already know and share their thoughts, making the lesson more engaging.

(continued)



**Get Moving Your Way:** Here, we provide practical examples or activities that show how the lesson's key points apply in real life. The aim is to show participants how to integrate the information into their daily routines in a functional and meaningful way.



**Try It:** This is where participants get the chance to practice what they've learned through hands-on physical activity. The Try It section includes functional physical activity movements that can be done individually or with a group, reinforcing the lesson's key message.



**Wrap-Up:** The final section ties everything together. It reinforces the key points of the lesson, provides a call to action, and gives participants something to think about or apply in the future.

By structuring the lessons this way, we aim to make each one relatable, achievable, and actionable. Our goal is not just to educate but to inspire participants to take practical steps toward improving their health and physical activity habits. This structure also keeps the lessons dynamic and ensures that participants are actively engaged throughout.

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### Lesson 1: Understanding the Physical Activity Guidelines



#### Key teaching point

Introduce participants to the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans and help them understand why regular movement matters and what types of activity are recommended for adults and older adults.



#### Hook: Open with a question or quick activity

Say:

“Did you know there are official recommendations for how much physical activity we need to stay healthy? They’re called the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. Adults should aim for at least 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each week (like brisk walking or biking), or 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity (like running or swimming), plus muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week.”

Ask:

"What’s one way you include physical activity in your day? What do you enjoy about that activity?"

OR

Try this:

Have participants stand up and stretch or march in place while they introduce themselves with their name and a favorite way to move. Keep it light and fun!

## Lesson 1, continued



### Why this matters

Share this with participants:

“Being physically active isn’t just about getting fit—it's about living a longer, healthier, and more independent life. Staying active helps reduce the risk of serious health conditions, boosts your mood, and even improves your sleep. The best part? Every bit of movement counts, and it all adds up.”

Optional: Personalize It!

Share a quick story or example like: “I noticed once I started walking after dinner, not only did I feel more energized, but I slept better, too!”

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### Check your knowledge/Participant voice

Ask participants:

- “Have you ever heard of the physical activity guidelines before today?”
- “Does 150 minutes a week sound like more or less than you expected?”
- “What do you think makes it hard or easy to be active regularly?”

Encourage a few participants to share their thoughts aloud.

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## Lesson 1, continued



### Get moving your way!

Talk about how the guidelines can fit into real life:

- Walking the dog, playing with kids or grandkids, gardening, or cleaning all count.
- Strengthening can be done at home using canned goods, resistance bands, or your own bodyweight.
- Balance can be improved with simple daily movements like standing on one foot while brushing your teeth.

Encourage participants to reflect:

“Think about how you already move during the day. Where could you add just a little more?”

Goal-Setting Prompt:

“There’s a page at the back of your booklet for goal setting. Take a moment to jot down one idea for how you can add just 10 more minutes of movement to your day this week.”

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### Try it: Do an activity together

Activity: Lead participants through a short, low-intensity activity (3–5 minutes) to get moving.

Examples:

- Marching in place
- Side steps with arm circles
- Shoulder rolls
- Balance challenge: stand on one foot for 10 seconds, then switch (Place a hand on your chair for extra stability.)

Remind them:

“This is all movement—and it counts!”

## Lesson 1, continued



### Wrap-Up / Takeaway Message

“The Physical Activity Guidelines recommend adults aim for 150–300 minutes of moderate activity per week, plus 2 or more days of muscle-strengthening. For older adults, it’s also important to include balance exercises to help prevent falls.”

“These guidelines are just a starting point. You don’t have to do it all at once. The key is to keep moving—your way, your pace. Over the next few weeks, we’ll dive into different types of movement like strength, cardio, balance, flexibility, and the difference between physical activity and structured exercise. Let’s get moving—together!”

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### Lesson 2: Physical Activity vs. Exercise – What’s the Difference?



#### Key teaching point

Help participants understand the difference between physical activity and exercise, and reinforce that both contribute to better health. Physical activity includes everyday movement, while exercise is more structured and intentional—but both matter!



#### Hook: Open with a question or quick activity

Say:

“Today we’re breaking down the difference between physical activity and exercise. People often use those words interchangeably—but they’re not quite the same!”

Ask:

“When you hear the word exercise, what do you picture?”

“What about physical activity—do you think of something different?”

Highlight This Point:

“Physical activity includes any movement that uses energy—like walking the dog, gardening, or climbing stairs. Exercise is a type of physical activity that’s planned, structured, and repetitive, like using the stair machine, going for a jog or doing a workout video.”

## Lesson 2, continued



### Why this matters

Say:

“The important thing is: all movement matters. Whether you’re scrubbing the floor or walking at the mall, your body is benefiting. And when you add in exercise—like strength training or aerobics—you build on that foundation by improving endurance, strength, and flexibility.”

Connect it to life:

“This matters at every stage of life, and especially as we age. Staying active helps us manage activities of daily living, like getting in and out of the car, reaching the top kitchen shelf, carrying groceries, or climbing stairs. It also keeps us doing the things we love—cooking, walking the dog, or playing with kids or grandkids. And it boosts mental health and independence, too.”

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### Check your knowledge/Participant voice

Ask participants:

- “Think about yesterday. What movements did you do that count as physical activity?” (ex: raking, mopping, parking out a distance)
- “Do you have anything in your routine right now that feels more like exercise?” (ex: strength training at the gym, fitness video)

Encourage participants to reflect and share one example. The goal is to recognize that they’re likely doing more than they realize!

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## Lesson 2, continued



### Get moving your way!

Say:

“This week, we’re focusing on finding more ways to move—without needing a gym membership or fancy equipment.”

Examples of Physical Activity:

- Housework like vacuuming or sweeping
- Gardening, walking to the store, or dancing while cooking
- Taking the stairs instead of the elevator

Examples of Exercise:

- A group fitness class
- Going to the gym for strength or cardio
- Doing a YouTube workout or following a training plan

Goal-Setting Prompt:

“Look at the goal-setting page in the back of your booklet. What’s one way you could add more movement into your day—either physical activity or structured exercise? Maybe it’s taking an extra walk after dinner or doing a stretch session during TV time. Jot it down and try it out this week.”

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## Lesson 2, continued



### Try it: Do an activity together

Say:

“Let’s move a bit and practice spotting the difference between physical activity and exercise in real life.”

*Activity: Which one is it?*

1. Call out or demonstrate 4–6 real-life movements, such as:
  - Sweeping the floor (physical activity)
  - Following a 10-minute online stretching video (exercise) Taking the dog for a brisk walk (physical activity)
  - Doing bicep curls with water bottles (exercise)
  - Gardening for 30 minutes (physical activity)
  - Taking the stairs instead of the elevator (physical activity)
2. After each one, ask: “Would you call that physical activity, exercise, or both?”
3. Participants can respond with a thumbs up, raise of hands, or quick discussion.

Wrap Up:

“Whether it’s planned or part of your day, movement helps your body stay strong and your mind feel good. The important thing is to find ways to move more and sit less—your way.”

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## Lesson 2, continued



### Wrap-Up / Takeaway Message

Say:

“Physical activity includes all kinds of movement, while exercise is more structured. But they both have powerful benefits. Even small changes—like walking during a phone call or stretching in the morning—can support your health.”

Preview:

“Next time, we’ll dive into the world of cardiovascular activity—what it is, why it matters, and how to make it fun.”

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### Lesson 3: Boost Your Health with Aerobic Activity



#### Key teaching point

Cardiovascular or aerobic activity is any movement that increases your heart rate and makes you breathe faster. It strengthens your heart and lungs and is a powerful tool for long-term health.



#### Hook: Open with a question or quick activity

Say:

“Today we’re talking about aerobic activity—also called ‘cardio’. This is the kind of movement that makes your heart beat faster and gets your lungs working harder.”

Ask:

- “What’s one thing you’ve done recently that got your heart pumping?”
- “How can you tell when you’re doing moderate vs. vigorous activity?”

Share This Guideline:

“Adults should aim for 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity activity (like brisk walking) or 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity (like running or swimming) each week. You can mix them up—every bit of movement adds up!”

## Lesson 3, continued



### Why this matters

Say:

“Aerobic activity is one of the best things you can do for your heart, lungs, brain, and even your mood. It reduces your risk of chronic diseases, improves sleep, boosts energy, and can even help with managing stress or anxiety.”

Connect it to life:

“Doing regular aerobic activity makes it easier to do the things you care about—whether that’s keeping up with kids or grandkids, dancing at a wedding, or walking through the grocery store without getting tired.”

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### Check your knowledge/Participant voice

Ask participants:

- “What are some ways you already do aerobic activity in your daily life?”
- “When was the last time you were out of breath in a good way—like from a brisk walk or dancing?”

Let participants share—hearing each other’s real-life examples helps build confidence and ideas.

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## Lesson 3, continued



### Get moving your way!

Say:

“You don’t need to run marathons to get heart-healthy benefits. Every bit of movement adds up—and you can break it into small chunks during the day.”

Examples of Moderate-Intensity Activities:

- Brisk walking
- Biking on flat ground
- Pushing a lawnmower
- Dancing in your living room

Examples of Vigorous-Intensity Activities:

- Running or jogging
- Swimming laps
- Jumping rope
- Aerobic fitness classes

The Talk Test:

“The ‘talk test’ is a simple way to gauge exercise intensity—if you can talk but not sing during activity, it’s moderate intensity; if you can’t say more than a few words without pausing for breath, it’s vigorous intensity.”

Goal-Setting Prompt:

“Turn to the goal-setting page in the back of your booklet. If you’re not already meeting the guidelines for cardiovascular movement, what’s one new way you could add 10 more minutes of cardio to your day this week? Maybe it’s a walk after dinner or dancing while you cook. Jot it down!”

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## Lesson 3, continued



### Try it: Do an activity together

Say:

“Let’s try a few movements that boost your heart rate but don’t require fancy equipment. These are things you can do at home or throughout your day.”

*Activity: 3-Minute Functional Cardio Circuit*

Do Together (30 seconds each, rest in between if needed):

1. March in Place – Lift your knees up high, swing your arms.
2. Step-Touch Side to Side – Step side-to-side like you're dancing or moving with music.
3. Arm Circles While Stepping – Gentle arm circles forward/backward while stepping in place.
4. Reaching Overhead Side-to-Side – Reach both arms overhead toward each side like you're grabbing something from a high shelf.

Wrap Up:

“How did that feel? Could you imagine doing something like this for 5 or 10 minutes a few times a day?”

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### Wrap-Up / Takeaway Message

Say:

“Aerobic activity doesn’t have to be intense to be effective. What matters is moving in ways that support your heart and lungs. Your mood and sleep may benefit too.”

Preview:

“Next time, we’ll focus on strength training—why it’s important and how to build strength at home, even without equipment.”

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### Lesson 4: Strengthen Your Muscles and Bones for a Healthier You



#### Key teaching point

Muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening activities help keep your body strong, support daily tasks, improve balance, and reduce the risk of injury—especially as we age.



#### Hook: Open with a question or quick activity

Say:

“Today we’re talking about strength—not just muscle strength, but also the strength of your bones. These are the kinds of movements that help you carry groceries, climb stairs, prevent falls, and stay steady on your feet.”

Ask:

- “What’s something you’ve done recently that took muscle or bone strength?”
- “Do you do anything that involves lifting, jumping, or even just climbing stairs?”

(continued)

## Lesson 4, continued

Share This Guideline:

“Adults should include muscle-strengthening activities for all major muscle groups at least two days per week. That could be gardening, lifting weights, doing push-ups, or even using resistance bands.

And don’t forget about bone-strengthening activities—things like jumping rope, running, hiking, playing tennis or basketball, and dancing. These movements put good stress on your bones, which helps them grow stronger.”

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### Why this matters

Say:

“As we get older, we naturally lose muscle mass and bone density. But by doing activities that challenge our muscles and bones, we can slow that down—and even build them back up.”

Connect it to life:

“Things like hiking a hill, dancing, or doing yardwork with heavy lifting help strengthen bones just as much as muscles. And stronger bones mean fewer breaks and less fear of falling.”

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### Check your knowledge/Participant voice

Ask participants:

- “What’s something you do now that might already be strengthening your muscles or bones?”
- “Which of these do you think you’d enjoy: dancing, gardening, yoga, hiking, or playing a game like basketball or tennis?”

Let participants reflect on what they’re already doing—and how they might re-frame it as strength-building.

## Lesson 4, continued



### Get moving your way!

Say:

“You don’t have to lift heavy weights or go to a gym to build strength. Strengthening happens in all sorts of ways—like carrying laundry up the stairs, squatting down to garden, or even jumping rope.”

Ideas to Try:

- Climb stairs a few extra times each day
- Go for a hike or a walk in a hilly area
- Dance to a few of your favorite songs
- Carry groceries instead of using a cart
- Play a game of catch or shoot hoops at the park

Goal-Setting Prompt:

“There’s a page in the back of your booklet for goal setting. What’s one way you could add a muscle- or bone-strengthening activity into your week—even just for 10 minutes? Write it down!”

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## Lesson 4, continued



Try it: Do an activity together

Say:

“These moves mimic real-life strength and add light bone-impact for stronger bones and muscles.”

*Activity: 3-Minute “Strong & Steady” Circuit*

Do Together (30 seconds each, rest as needed):

1. Chair Squats – Builds leg and core strength for everyday movements like sitting, standing, or lifting.
2. Wall Push-Ups – Strengthens chest, arms, and posture.
3. March with Heel Lifts (Low-Impact Jumping Alternative) – March in place, lifting heels and swinging arms. Add a gentle bounce to mimic bone-loading/impact movements.
4. Side Steps with Reach Overhead – Mimics dance or sports movement, building coordination, and balance.

Optional Bone-Boosters (if participants are able):

- Mini Jumps in Place (low-impact version: heel lifts or tip-toe hops)
- Dance Break! – A 30-second freestyle movement to your favorite beat.

Wrap Up:

“How did those feel? These simple movements are a great starting point for building strength that supports your daily life.”

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## Lesson 4, continued



### Wrap-Up / Takeaway Message

Say:

“You don’t have to be lifting heavy weights to build strength. Dancing, climbing stairs, hiking, or even carrying a heavy laundry basket all count toward muscle and bone health.”

Reinforce the Message:

“The more we move in ways that strengthen us, the longer we stay active, independent, and injury-free.”

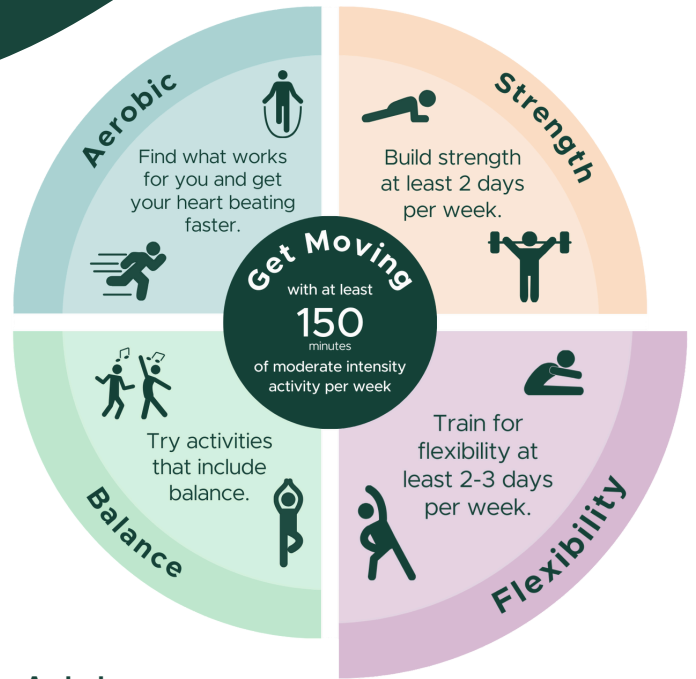
Preview:

“Next time, we’ll focus on balance and flexibility—how movements like stretching, yoga, and stability training can keep you steady and mobile.”

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### Lesson 5: Flexibility – Adults and Older Adults



#### Key teaching point

Help participants understand the importance of flexibility training and how it supports mobility, reduces injury, and enhances quality of life—especially as we age.

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#### Hook: Open with a question or quick activity

Say:

“Flexibility might not always be top of mind, but it plays a huge role in helping us move comfortably, reduce pain, and stay independent as we age. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend stretching all major muscle groups at least 2–3 days per week.”

Ask:

“When do you feel most stiff or tight during the day? Do you ever stretch after being in one position for a long time?”

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## Lesson 5, continued



### Why this matters

Say:

“Flexibility is about your joints’ ability to move freely and comfortably through their full range of motion. As we age, or sit for long periods, muscles and joints can tighten, which increases the risk of pain or injury. Stretching helps keep us moving, doing everyday things like reaching for a shelf or tying shoes.”

Examples of Flexibility Activities:

- Stretching exercises (hamstring stretch, shoulder stretch, calf stretch)
- Yoga or Pilates
- Tai Chi
- Dynamic stretches (arm circles, leg swings)

Connect it to life:

“I like to stretch while I watch TV or right after a walk. It’s a great way to wind down and still do something good for my body.”

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### Check your knowledge/Participant voice

Ask participants:

- “Have you ever tried yoga, stretching, or another flexibility activity?”
- “What’s one part of your body that feels tight or stiff most often?”
- “Do you notice a difference when you stretch regularly?”

Encourage discussion. Relate answers back to how flexibility helps with daily tasks and overall comfort.

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## Lesson 5, continued



### Get moving your way!

Say:

“Stretching regularly helps with everyday movements and can even improve your posture and sleep. It doesn’t take long—but consistency makes a difference.”

### How Much Flexibility Activity Is Recommended?

- Adults and older adults should aim for 2–3 days per week.
- Hold each stretch for 10–30 seconds, repeating 2–4 times.
- Stretch after muscles are warm—like after a walk.
- Include balance-focused flexibility activities like yoga or Tai Chi to help prevent falls.

### Goal-Setting Prompt:

Ask:

“What’s one time this week you could add 5–10 minutes of stretching?”

“Could you stretch during a TV commercial, after a walk, or before bed?”

Have participants use the goal-setting page in the back of the booklet to jot down one realistic flexibility goal.

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## Lesson 5, continued



### Try it: Do an activity together

#### Activity:

Lead participants through 1–2 flexibility movements. Remind them to breathe and move slowly:

#### 1. Seated Hamstring Stretch

- Sit tall toward the front of your chair, extend one leg straight out, heel on the floor. Pull your toes back. You might feel the stretch already.
- For a deeper stretch, hinge at the hips (not waist) until you feel a comfortable stretch.
- Hold for 10–20 seconds. Switch legs.

#### 2. Neck and Shoulder Stretch

- Sit or stand tall.
- Gently tilt your right ear to your right shoulder.
- Option: add light pressure with your right hand on your head. Hold for 10–20 seconds.
- Switch sides.

#### Wrap Up:

“Remember, only stretch to the point of mild tension—never pain. And always breathe!”

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### Wrap-Up / Takeaway Message

#### Say:

“Flexibility is one of the keys to staying mobile and independent. Stretching just a few times a week can help reduce stiffness, prevent injury, and help you feel more relaxed.”

“Start where you are—every little bit of movement counts!”

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### Lesson 6: Balance and Stability – Adults and Older Adults



#### Key teaching point

Teach participants the importance of balance and stability exercises for preventing falls, maintaining independence, and improving confidence with daily movements.



#### Hook: Open with a question or quick activity

Say:

“How often do you think about your balance during the day? The truth is, good balance is something we may take for granted until it becomes challenged. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that older adults do balance training at least 2–3 days a week to help prevent falls.”

Ask:

“Are there certain movements or activities that make you feel more cautious or unsure of your balance?”

Or try this:

Invite participants to try heel-to-toe walking (along a line or tile edge on the floor) for a few steps and notice how it feels. They can run a hand along the wall for added stability, if desired.

## Lesson 6, continued



### Why this matters

Say:

“Balance is more than just standing still—it helps us walk confidently, climb stairs, and avoid falls. As we age, our muscles, vision, and coordination change, which can affect our stability. Practicing balance and stability exercises can help us stay safe, mobile, and independent.”

Examples of Balance and Stability Activities:

- Standing on one leg
- Heel-to-toe walking
- Sit-to-stand from a chair
- Tai Chi or yoga
- Leg raises or toe/heel raises

Connect it to life:

“I realized how important balance was when I started feeling less safe using my step stool to put groceries away. After adding balance practice into my week, I feel more steady and confident.”

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### Check your knowledge/Participant voice

Ask participants:

- “What balance or coordination challenges have you experienced?”
- “Have you tried yoga, Tai Chi, or even standing on one foot while brushing your teeth?”
- “Do you ever practice getting up from a chair without using your hands?”

Encourage conversation and gently link responses back to safety and independence.

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## Lesson 6, continued



### Get moving your way!

Say:

“Balance activities can be simple and done at home with little or no equipment. Start small and build up as you feel more confident.”

#### How Much Balance Activity Is Recommended?

- Older adults (65+): Balance training at least 2–3 days/week.
- Include movements that strengthen legs and core, like sit-to-stand or toe raises.
- Adults of all ages can benefit from incorporating balance into daily life, especially if they've noticed changes in coordination.

#### Goal-Setting Prompt:

Ask:

“When this week could you practice a balance activity? Could you try standing on one leg while brushing your teeth, or rise up on your toes while waiting for the microwave?”

Encourage participants to use the goal-setting page in the back of the booklet to write down a specific balance-related goal.

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## Lesson 6, continued



### Try it: Do an activity together

#### Activity:

Lead participants through 2 short balance movements:

#### 1. Toe and Heel Raises

- Stand tall, hold onto a chair or counter.
- Rise up onto toes, hold 2–3 seconds, then rock back onto heels.
- Repeat 8–10 times.

#### 2. Sit-to-Stand (Chair Squat)

- Sit in a sturdy chair with feet flat.
- Without using hands, stand up slowly, then sit back down.
- Repeat 5–8 times.

#### Wrap Up:

“Remember, use support as needed. It’s okay to go slow. The goal is progress, not perfection!”

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### Wrap-Up / Takeaway Message

#### Say:

“Balance and stability exercises help prevent falls, improve confidence, and support independence—especially as we get older. You don’t need a gym or special gear to work on balance—just a few minutes, a sturdy surface, and a willingness to try.”

“Everyone benefits from balance training. Start where you are, go at your own pace, and practice regularly.”





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