

# Monthly Newsletter

Free please take a copy



Feb 2021 | Issue Number 62



**Accepting new patients**

Contact Your Foot

Specialist/Chiroprapist:

**The Footcare Centre**

**905-357-0214**

[niagara@thefootcarecentre.ca](mailto:niagara@thefootcarecentre.ca)

Suite 302,  
Stamford Medical Centre,  
4256 Portage Road,  
Niagara Falls, ON, L2E 6A4

Web: [www.thefootcarecentre.ca](http://www.thefootcarecentre.ca)

## Update

*We know all our patients have important and essential footcare needs and we are pleased to say we are open and available to treat during this time.*

## **Falls prevention issue.**

### **How to Improve mobility and balance: simple exercises**

People with good agility, mobility and balance are less likely to fall. This obviously changes if we do not pay attention to what we are doing, if there are obstacles in our way, or we are on uneven surfaces. Particularly, as we age, we generally become more unstable.

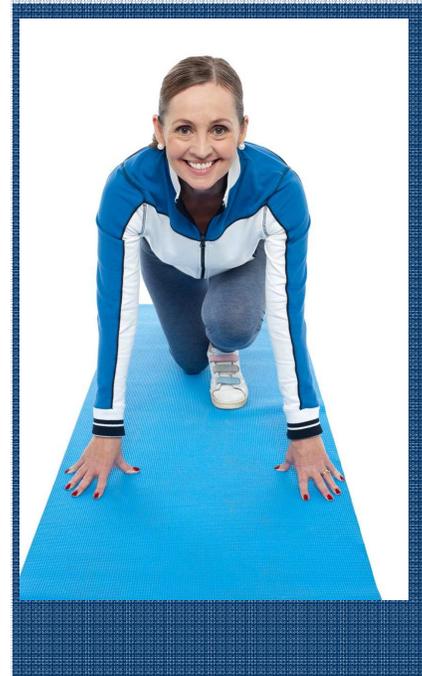
The following are 2 simple exercises to help you improve mobility at your foot and ankle and help improve your balance!

1) Stretch your feet and toes as often as possible. One simple way to do this is by sitting on a chair and point and stretch your toes away from yourself. Then,

point the tips or your toes up and stretch that way. Repeat the exercise 10 times and do without shoes to help the toes bend more freely.

2) Make a straight line on the ground using some masking tape and follow it to the end, placing each foot in front of the other, placing each foot on the line, or as close to the line as possible. Walk 2-3 meters and then turn and return the other direction. Ensure you have a kitchen worksurface or countertop alongside you in case you need some support.

In general, try to move your legs and feet more during spare time, instead of passively sitting or lying down.



## Fears of Falls, feeling wobbly, or unstable?

There are many reasons why we may become more unstable and become more likely to fall. These include age, general health conditions, the medicines we take, the footwear we wear, the pain we are in, the safety of our general environment and much more.

Take the opportunity when you are at your chiropodist/foot specialist to learn as much as you can about falls prevention.

**Top tips** for those less stable, tripping, or who have even had a fall in the past:

- 1) Be proactive - ensure you speak with your pharmacist and doctor about your medications to ensure that your prescribed medicines and dosages are not affecting you adversely.
- 2) Clear clutter – create a safe, 'clutter free' environment around the home (including rugs and other trip hazards)
- 3) Have painful feet? – have treatment! Maintain regular visits to your chiropodist/foot specialist to look after troublesome nails, callus and corns. Keep feet healthy and happy through having regular office visits.



- 4) Understand the risk – and do something about it. This could include:
  - a. **Assessing overall stability:** Chiropodists/foot specialists may test overall functional mobility and undertake Computerized balance testing (called stabilometry).
  - b. Offer interventions to help: **Chiropodists/foot specialists know footwear!** Often an initial intervention will be to prescribe and supply a stable shoe.
  - c. **Improving function and strength** - Chiropodists/foot specialists may offer or suggest an exercise program to help improve balance, co-ordination, and strength.
  - d. **Follow up**– how have things changed? Your Chiropodists/foot specialists will want to know how things have changed, improved, or deteriorated.
  - e. **Reporting** – An important part of falls prevention is that information is shared. A key component of managing risk associated to instability and falls is *communication*. Ensure concerns about falling or instability are always discussed or reported to your health or care team.

## How Proper Foot Care Prevents Falls

The risk of experiencing unexpected falls increases as a person gets older. Such incidents happen due to various reasons, including poor balance, weakness as well as wider changes in general health. **HOWEVER**, the importance of footcare and its role in falls prevention cannot be underestimated.

Poor footwear choices, foot pain, declines in balance (proprioception – the spatial awareness of our limbs and feet) and an unawareness of our risk of falling all play a part and can all be helped by your foot clinic.



**Choosing the Right Shoes** – so what shoes are best to reduce falls?

Many patients reporting falls do not wear shoes that fit their feet perfectly. The best choice in this scenario is to buy fitness shoes that sit well, have the correct width, and promote stability.

If you have postural problems that may affect your balance such as flat feet or other similar foot conditions, consult with your chiropodist or foot specialist. There may be the need to assess this in further detail or prescribe custom orthotics (foot supports).

If there are difficulty with laces, that may increase the risk of falling if left untied, it may be beneficial to purchase shoes that have Velcro closures instead.

Avoid loose unsecured slippers indoors, but rather choose a pair of more structured house shoes. This indoor footwear should have a nonslip and steady sole, also with a fastening.

In short, the wrong footwear can contribute to feet feeling unstable. Ill-fitting shoes that slip or cause pain can lead to instability. Instability can lead to trips or falls.

A foot specialist/chiropodist with a special interest in fitting footwear is particularly useful. Orthopedic shoes, with features that are catered to an individual's specific needs can improve safety and mobility. Get appropriate advice from your foot specialist.

**Foot Pain** – reducing pain to reduce falls. How your chiropodist/foot specialist can reduce foot pain.

Offering regular, maintenance foot care can be important in the battle against painful feet. Keeping toenails in check, hard skin minimized and having painful corns regularly removed helps people move more freely. By reducing the need to “guard” painful feet every footstep, chiropodists/foot specialists hope to reduce the risk of falls because of ‘antalgic gait’ – an abnormal walking pattern due to pain.

**Balance** – how can balance and proprioception be improved?

Although falls may occur in individuals with healthy legs and feet, improving the overall health, and feed-back to and from, these body parts is important. Generally, keep moving, however some specific balance exercises such as tai chi can help. In fact according to the national health service (NHS) “studies have shown that it can help people aged 65 and over to reduce stress, improve posture, balance and general mobility, and increase muscle strength in the legs” <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/guide-to-tai-chi/>

## The Footcare Centre

Suite 302,  
Stamford Medical Centre,  
4256 Portage Road,  
Niagara Falls ON,  
L2E 6A4

**Phone:**  
905-357-0214

**E-Mail:**  
[niagara@thefootcarecentre.ca](mailto:niagara@thefootcarecentre.ca)

**Web Site:**  
[www.thefootcarecentre.ca](http://www.thefootcarecentre.ca)

If you would like a copy of this newsletter emailed to you every month, then please let reception know and they will ensure that your email address is added to our distribution list.

*The Care,  
Professionalism and  
Time that your feet  
deserve*

**The Footcare**  
CENTRE

## How Proper Foot Care Prevents Falls (Cont..)

**Risk.** Are there ways to tell there is risk of falling?

Ask your chiropodist/foot specialist to help assess stability and falls risk by using tests such as “the up and go” test and pressure plate analysis (called stabilometry).

Your pharmacist can also review your medicines as part of assessing falls risk.



Would you be willing to write a Google review about your experience today? If so, please visit:

**<https://goo.gl/rrcF33>**

Your feedback is highly appreciated and important to us and we look forward to reading your comments.



Like / Follow us.....



[www.facebook.com/footcarecentreniagarafalls](http://www.facebook.com/footcarecentreniagarafalls)



<https://twitter.com/footcareontario>

**Attribution:** All images are from Yay Images.