

Cox® Proprioception Exercise Program

Proprioception—a big word that simply refers to your sense of body position in your surroundings. The nerve endings in muscles, tendons and joints send information throughout the body to keep it standing straight, walking straight, sitting straight. With back pain, degeneration and aging, you may feel that you don't "track right", you don't walk straight, you lose your balance more easily. Regaining proprioception is important to prevent falls that lead to fractures. Simple exercises to stimulate those nerve endings and retrain them to sense their positioning better help you regain your confidence in getting around and reduce your risk of falls.



Stand on One Foot

With support (wall, counter, chair), you start a series of proprioceptive exercises that build on your ability to stand securely in one spot. Start with the exercise with which you are most comfortable.



1. Hold wall. 2. Lift foot. 3. eyes open 3. other leg 4. eyes closed 4. other leg

1. Hold a counter or chair or wall.
2. Lift one leg by bending at the knee and lifting the foot. Stand on the other foot.
3. If you feel secure, let go of the counter/chair/wall, and stand on one leg without support. Switch legs.
4. If you feel secure without support, close your eyes, and stand on one leg for as long as you can.
5. Make a goal of at least 30 seconds in each position.

NOTE: Give yourself time to adapt. Proprioception doesn't typically return instantly. It is a work-in-progress.



Tandem-Walking

This exercise seems easy, but when your proprioception is off, it's not!



1. Just walk heel to toe slowly and in a straight line.
2. Put your arms out to balance, if you need.
3. Practice this until you are comfortable and confident.

NOTE: It will take more concentration than you think!

Disclaimer: Only do these exercises if you are recommended to do so by your doctor. Do not exercise without the recommendation by your doctor. Listen carefully to any modifications your doctor gives you for each exercise. Only do the exercises to your tolerance. If you experience any pain, stop the exercises, and discuss with your doctor. If you have any questions about the appropriateness of any exercise, ask your doctor before proceeding.