



integrated working

## **Exercise for falls prevention in West Suffolk**

If your patient has already experienced a fall or is afraid of falling then an exercise programme called Otago is recommended. The programme is clinically proven to reduce falls by 37% in older people. It consists of 21 exercises which focus on building strength in the legs and improving standing balance.

Improving strength and balance is the most cost effective way of reducing falls and injuries in older people.

West Suffolk CCG is working with Age UK Suffolk to increase the provision of falls prevention exercise classes in West Suffolk. All classes deliver the clinically proven exercise programme called Otago, delivered by trained instructors and offer a structured yet individual progressive plan.

### **To find your patient's nearest Otago Falls Prevention Exercise Class either:**

1. Contact Sam Reid (Falls Prevention Exercise Co-ordinator) on 01284 757758 or [sam.reid@ageuksuffolk.org](mailto:sam.reid@ageuksuffolk.org)
2. Follow this link: <http://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/home.page> - type in your patient's postcode to find their nearest class

### **For more information contact Sam Reid – 01284 757758 and see the following leaflets:**

- [Positive Steps - for healthy ageing](#)
- [Positive Steps - Otago](#)

### **A map of Otago exercise classes is available here:**

<http://batchgeo.com/map/7f6e9cc78ac898fb2249cd3bf3099c49>

### **The importance of exercise**

It is important to keep fit and active. It can increase leg strength, improve bone density and generally improve well-being. Evidence tells us that older adults who have declining physical function will lose mobility and have a limited and isolated life. Sedentary life increases with age and seems to rise sharply at 70yrs, for instance, older adults spend 10 hours or more each day either sitting or lying down.



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Guidance from the Chief Medical Officer suggests that older adults (65yrs +) should aim to be active daily and that over 1 week should aim for activity levels of:

- 2 and a 1/2 hours of moderate intensity exercise
- undertake physical activity designed to improve muscle strength and balance (Start Active, Stay Active 2011)

What does this mean? Is it achievable? Yes – by breaking it down into practical ‘chunks’

- 2 and 1/2 hours of moderate intensity exercise per week can be broken down into 30 minutes on at least 5 days a week. Walking, dancing, line-dancing, gardening, even the simple ‘sit to stand’ are all excellent forms of exercise that will help to increase bone strength as well.
- adding in exercises that improve lower body strength and balance will help prevent falling. Tai Chi and yoga are useful for this.

#### **Websites for information about other exercise classes across Suffolk:**

- [www.activlives.org.uk](http://www.activlives.org.uk)
- [www.livewellsuffolk.org.uk](http://www.livewellsuffolk.org.uk) Stepping Out Health Walks across Suffolk
- [www.angcomleisure.com](http://www.angcomleisure.com)
- [www.acleisure.com](http://www.acleisure.com)
- [www.ssleisure.co.uk](http://www.ssleisure.co.uk)