

WELLNESS QUARTERLY

well-being news, advice, and opinions from christie gardens staff and residents

Fall 2021



Mona Babb: Taking the Fall out of Autumn

I hope you are all taking advantage of what is left of this simply gorgeous weather.

Please remember to stay cool, hydrate, and keep your heads covered as you enjoy the many hobbies, activities, and the ever popular “staycations”.

As the sun continues to wrestle the city’s supply of ice cream into submission it’s hard to believe that Fall is right around the corner, so this Wellness Quarterly will be, fittingly, themed around falls; the gravity kind not the Autumn kind.

Most falls occur in the home, a place we’re most likely to be alone. Falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations among Canadian older adults. In fact, between 20% to 30% of older adults fall each year.

While Christie Gardens has programs in place such as night time check-ins to ensure residents are never alone in a time of need, monitoring systems can also provide additional ways to ensure help is available immediately.

Many are already familiar with services like Lifeline. Lifeline features a necklace or bracelet that calls an emergency contact when pressed. Did you know Lifeline also offers a version that automatically detects falls?

Some have also had success with various “smart devices”. While not advertised for fall assistance; an Apple watch can function very similarly to Lifeline with the right apps.

continues on back ...

in this issue ...

Health:

Taking the Fall out of Autumn

Body Mechanics:

How to Improve Balance

Profile:

Negin Basiri, RD

Pharmacist’s Perspective:

Fall Prevention

ALSO:

Quick Fall Risk Assessment
Nutrition and Fall Prevention
Fitness and Physiotherapy
at Christie Gardens

Profile: Negin Basiri, Registered Dietitian

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I am obsessed with food and love cooking, which is one of the reasons I chose to become a dietitian. After finishing my master's degree in nutritional sciences, I started working as a clinical dietitian in different health care settings, providing nutritional counselling for various chronic diseases. Over the last 2 years my main role has been serving as a dietitian for seniors living in retirement/long-term care homes. I am also a Certified Diabetes Educator and provide nutrition counselling for diabetes management.

I also love music and have tried learning different oriental and western musical instruments over the years, which led me to my favourite instrument, the piano. I love piano more than anything else, however I should add that I am still an amateur!

How did you get into this field?

My father is a doctor and loves teaching, so whenever he had the chance, he would teach my siblings and I about the human body, anatomy, and physiology.

On the other hand, since I have always been passionate about cooking and food, I figured nutritional sciences was where I could use my knowledge of the human body and food and nutrition all together in one place!

What is your philosophy of care?

My philosophy of care is to look at every aspect of the human body together; looking at emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects, along with physical health. I believe this is even more important in the field of nutrition, as our emotions, feelings, and social interactions are strongly connected to our food choices, such as what we eat when

we are happy, sad, celebrating, or feeling lonely to cope or support ourselves or others during these situations.

What are your goals as a dietitian?

My main goal as a registered dietitian has always been helping people make sustainable lifestyle changes while recognizing their unique values, rights, and autonomy to improve their quality of life.

What brought you here?

I have been working with Sodexo for around 2 years and I was fortunate to be offered an RD position.

What do you enjoy most about working here?

I really enjoy the friendly atmosphere where the staff are always working hard to create a familial, homelike environment, and I am very proud to be part of the Christie Gardens team.

What do you want readers to know?

If you have any questions/concerns about your diet, feel free to ask me, I will be more than happy to answer your questions.



Negin Basiri, RD
Dietitian

NUTRITION AND FALL PREVENTION (part one)

Proper nutrition and hydration are key factors to assist in fall prevention.

Dehydration, or excessive loss of body water can cause fatigue, dizziness, low blood pressure, headaches, muscle cramps, and consequently higher risk of falls.

- Eat more water-rich foods such as vegetable, fruits, broth and soups, puddings, and Jell-O.
- Drink a variety of hot or cold beverages during the day, like water, juice, coffee and tea.
- Take at least 100 ml or more water each time you take your medications.
- If you forget to drink, use different strategies to address that, drinking at activities, have a tea-time with your friends, keep a bottle of water on your desk, and drink a cup of water when you wake up.

Another contributing factor is loss of muscle mass.

Muscle loss decreases strength, physical performance, mobility and function, which increases the risk of falls. Different variables contribute to loss of skeletal mass and function, but we have control over two variables: nutrition and physical activity.

NUTRITION AND FALL PREVENTION (part two)

To maintain muscle mass, it is crucial to consume adequate protein.

Protein is an essential nutrient, important for building and maintaining muscles. Protein is found in many foods such as fish, poultry, milk, eggs, yogurt, cheese, nuts and seeds, and soy products.

Include protein from a variety of different food sources, enjoying a variety of foods will help you get a range of important vitamins and minerals along with your protein.

Make sure enough calories are consumed during the day, otherwise your body will use protein as a fuel.

And last but not the least, get enough Vitamin D and calcium.

Vitamin D and calcium help build stronger bones and maintain muscle function which help to prevent falls and fractures.

Overall, we can prevent falls by focusing on getting enough nutrition and hydration. For personalized advice and a full nutrition assessment, consult with a registered dietitian.

Pharmacist's Perspective: Fall Prevention

Every year, thousands of older adults fall and injure themselves. Did you know that 85% of hospitalizations for injuries are because of a fall? For seniors, most falls happen at home while performing normal daily activities. In this newsletter, we review potential causes of falls, then, we provide some strategies to follow to reduce the risk of falling.

Factors that Increase the Risk of Falls

Health and age-related changes such as decreased mobility and balance, slower reflexes, low vision, muscle weakness and other medical conditions.

Environmental hazards such as poor lighting, slippery floors, clutter, loose electrical cords and uneven floors.

Social and economic factors such as a weaker support network, fewer family and friends to talk to, housing conditions and difficulty accessing health services.

Other factors such as history of falls, fear of falling, poor nutrition, improper footwear or clothing, decreased physical activity, and taking multiple medications (including prescription and over the counter items).

Key Ways to Reduce Your Risk of Falling

- Stay active and exercise regularly. Focus on exercises that improve balance and strengthen your core and lower body.
- Drink water to stay hydrated and make healthy food choices.
- Make sure you are getting enough calcium and vitamin D, as recommended by your healthcare professional.
- Get your eyesight checked regularly and wear glasses as prescribed.
- Review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist. Some medications can increase your risk of falls, including over the counter medications.

- Remove tripping hazards from your home.
- Turn on the lights and add lighting in areas that are dimly lit.
- Install and use grab bars in the bathrooms and railings and non-slip treads on stairways.
- Use caution in public areas and be aware of hazards such as uneven pavement or slippery floors.
- Wear shoes with non-slip soles that fit well and clothing that will not trip you or catch on things.
- Take your time and avoid rushing or carrying too many items.
- Have discussions with family and friends about ways to reduce your fear of falling such as a medical alert service in the event you fall and require help.
- Get a falls prevention risk assessment from your healthcare provider.

Your risk of falling should be checked regularly, especially after changes to your medication or your health status. Talk to family, friends and your CareRx pharmacist to see how you can reduce your risk of falls.



Andrea Jackson
Pharmacist, CareRx

QUICK FALL RISK ASSESSMENT

It is important to understand that fit or frail, young or old, anyone can have a fall. However, there are some factors that increase the risk for falls for an older adult. To determine if you or a person you care for is at risk of falling, answer these six simple questions:

1. Have you fallen in the last year?
2. Are you currently taking four or more prescription medications?
3. Do you have a history of stroke or Parkinson's disease?
4. Do you have any problems with your balance?
5. Are you unable to stand up from a chair without using your arms?
6. Have you limited your recreational or social activities due to a fear of falling?

A YES answer to any of these questions indicates an ELEVATED RISK for falls.

Answer YES to THREE OR MORE questions, and there is a HIGHER RISK of falls

ARE YOU AT RISK?

Physiotherapy Tips: Lesley Stachelbeck

Tips for reducing the risk of falls:

- Try to be physically active every day to improve your posture, muscle strength, and balance.
- Consider enrolling in a supervised exercise program and walking daily.
- Have your vision and hearing checked each year.
- Wear a good pair of lace-up shoes that will support your feet and avoid high heels and slippers (especially without an enclosed heel) because they can increase the risk of slipping and losing your balance.
- Use aids such as canes or walkers for walking and balancing and view them as tools to help you do things and not as signs of weakness.
- Eat a healthy diet and stay hydrated.

Suggestions to make your home safer:

- Improve the lighting in your home.
- Remove things you can trip over from stairs and places where you walk.
- Have handrails installed and adequate lighting on all staircases.
- Remove throw rugs or use double-sided tape to keep rugs from slipping.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on the shower floor.
- Have grab bars installed next to your toilet and in the tub or shower.
- Be mindful around pets if they like to keep close to your feet as they can cause you to trip.



Lesley Stachelbeck
Registered Physiotherapist

Fitness Services at Christie Gardens

Residents come to us with the goals of improving energy, increasing mobility and strength, improving balance, and decreasing joint pain.

We have developed the following programs in order to address these needs:

The Exercise Class Series: Five levels of group fitness programming in support of your goals. Each level is designed to challenge your body and help you reach higher levels of fitness;

Stretch & Strengthen Class: Open to all levels, we focus on achieving a deeper sense of peace and contentment, while gaining clarity of mind through focused breathing techniques; and

One on one personal training sessions: for an additional cost, receive an individualized fitness program and learn how to effectively perform exercises under the direct supervision of a fitness professional.



Jeff Dube and Alfie McLaughlin
Fitness Instructors

Physiotherapy Services at Christie Gardens



Jeff Dube, Marclint Garcia, Alfie McLaughlin, Mae Leyco, Lesley Stachelback, and Karolina Scott

The benefits of physiotherapy at Christie Gardens include pain reduction, general strength and joint range improvements, and so much more.

By means of therapeutic exercises and other modalities, our physiotherapy team will assist in restoring, improving, and maintaining physical function.

Examples of treatment include:

- Mobility and fall risk assessments;
- One on one physiotherapy treatment twice a week utilizing a variety of modalities including ultrasound, heating pads, TENS machines, and specific exercises and education;
- Parkinson's Group Class by invitation: this dynamic class focuses on balance, proprioception and full body coordination, while incorporating the use of balls, and balance equipment, therabands and weights; and
- 1:1 Balance and Gait analysis and training

Taking the Fall out of Autumn (continued from cover)

which can let you make phone calls with your voice.

Despite the importance of having contingencies in place in case a fall occurs, the old adage “prevention is always better than cure” applies.

The consensus among our in-house experts in every department is that there’s a need for more awareness about fall prevention.

This issue of the Wellness Quarterly was developed through the collaboration of our Physiotherapy department lead by Lesley Stachelbeck, Negin Basiri our Registered dietitian, Jeff Dubé our Fitness Program Coordinator, Andrea Jackson of CareRx our in-house

Pharmacist, and the Health and Wellness Nursing team.

The Health and Wellness team is available 24 hours per day 7 days per week to assist in post-fall assessment and assistance.

Please call us right away if you have fallen. I am assured that the tips provided will be of great value.

Ask yourself: am I at risk? Is my environment safe?

On behalf of the Health and Wellness Team we wish you all a fall-free, Fall.



Mona Babb, RN
Director of Health and Wellness

Body Mechanics: How to Improve Balance

For anyone wanting to focus on their balance and cardio, autumn is an ideal time for improving in this area of fitness as the mild weather offers many outdoor opportunities for walking.

My general recommendation for balance exercises is a 10 to 15 minute daily practice of balancing on the tiptoes, standing on one foot, and standing heel to toe. These same

exercises are practiced during all of our fitness classes as well.

The most comprehensive way to address balance is a daily walk, as it not only targets our balance, but cardio as well.

Strategies for improvement can involve: more frequent walks, longer walks, taking larger steps, walking uphill, and even the

use of walking poles as they support a larger stride and foot speed.

Alfie and I are always available to discuss plans and strategies for improving all areas of fitness. Please reach out; we are happy to help.

Jeff Dubé, BSc, PTS, ATC
Fitness Program Coordinator



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