



American Stroke Association®
A division of the American Heart Association.

Together to End Stroke®

Movement for Prevention of Falls After Stroke: An Action Plan

A Guide for Survivors of Stroke

Why Movement Matters for Fall Prevention

After a stroke, moving your body helps you get better and lowers your chance of falling. Exercise can help you feel more balanced and improve your mood. Being active regularly makes falling less likely. It's important to start slowly and safely.

This action plan gives you safe ways to start moving and building strength at home. Always talk with your health care team before beginning any new exercise program.

CREATING YOUR PERSONAL MOVEMENT PLAN •

Talk With Your Health Care Team First

Before starting any exercise program, check with your health care professional, including physical and/or occupational therapist. They can help you create your plan.

Set Realistic Goals

Discuss your goals with your health care team.

Examples of starting goals may include:

- » Standing for longer periods of time with or without support
- » Walking more steadily around your home
- » Getting up from chairs more easily
- » Feeling more confident with daily activities

Assess Your Starting Point

The health care team will help you to:



Be Safe:

Always check with your doctor or therapist before starting any exercise.



Make Changes if Needed:

If an exercise feels too hard or painful, ask how to make it easier or try a different one.



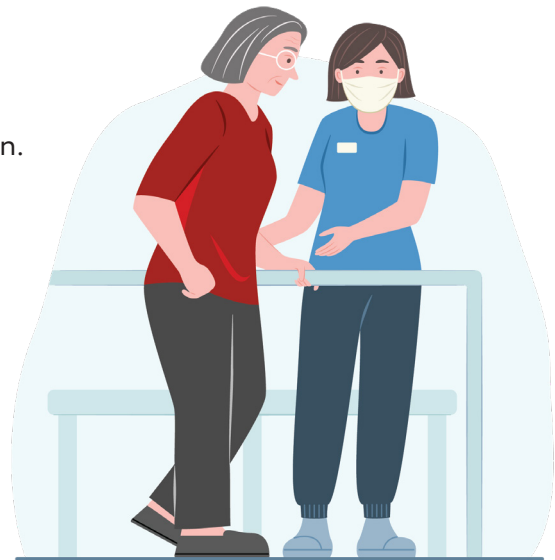
Stick to a Plan:

Set a schedule that works for you to start small and build up slowly.



Know When to Level Up:

When exercises start to feel easy, your therapist can help you try more challenging ones.



Choosing Appropriate Exercises

Your health care team will select exercises specific to your needs.

They will look at:

- » How well you can keep your balance
- » If one side of your body is weaker
- » How long you can stay active without getting too tired
- » What movements make you feel unsure or nervous

They'll recommend activities that:

- » Are challenging but not overwhelming
- » Are safe to do at home
- » Help with what you need most such as balance, strength, or flexibility

When to Stop or Change Your Exercises

Your health care team will let you know what signs to watch.

Ask them for:

- » A list of signs that mean you should stop or take a break, such as dizziness, chest pain, or feeling very tired
- » A list of symptoms you should tell them about, such as new pain or weakness
- » A list of signs that mean you should call 911 right away, such as new balance concerns, eye drooping, face drooping, new arm or leg weakness, or slurred speech

B.E.F.A.S.T.

Balance Loss	Eye (Vision) Changes	Face Drooping	Arm Weakness	Speech Difficulty	Time to Call 911
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TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS •

Keep a simple record of:



Which exercises you did



How long you completed each exercise

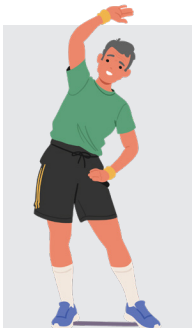


How you felt during and after



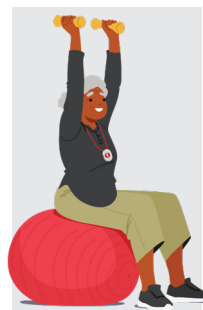
Any changes or improvements you notice

SAFETY GUIDELINES •



Home Exercise Safety Tips

- » Always exercise in a clear, uncluttered area.
- » Wear non-slip shoes with good support.
- » Have a phone nearby in case you need help.
- » Exercise when you feel alert and energetic, not when tired.



Emergency Planning

Have a plan in case you fall or need help:

- » Keep a list of emergency numbers in one easy-to-see place.
- » Consider a medical alert device.
- » Make sure someone knows your exercise schedule.

STAYING MOTIVATED •

Celebrate Consistency

Commit to how often you'll do your routine and celebrate:

- » Each time you complete your exercise routine
- » Every week that you meet your weekly commitment
- » Every month you complete your monthly commitment

Celebrate Progress

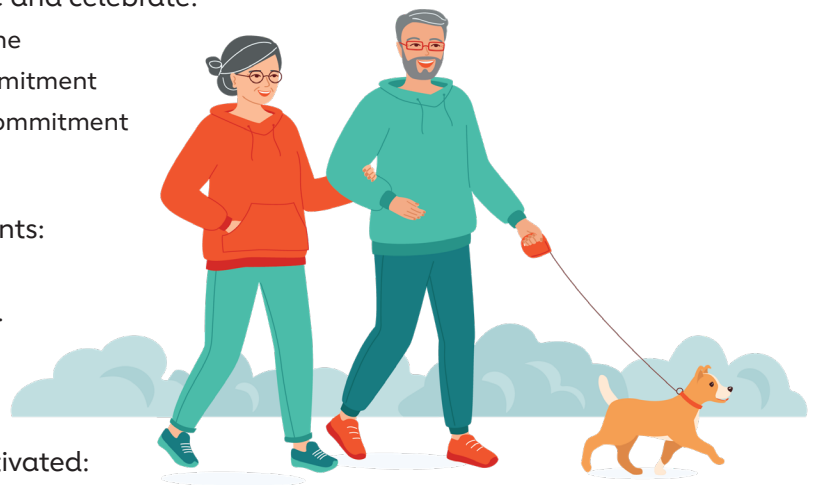
Take time to acknowledge your improvements:

- » Keep a record of your achievements.
- » Share successes with your health care team.
- » Reward yourself for reaching goals.

Involving Family and Friends

Support from others can help you stay motivated:

- » Ask family members to exercise with you.
- » Share your goals with people who care about you.
- » Let others know about your progress. Invite them to celebrate with you.



RESOURCES AND NEXT STEPS •

When to Advance Your Plan

Work with your health care team to progress when you:

- » Can complete your current exercises easily
- » Feel more confident with your balance
- » Have consistent energy for longer periods
- » Want to try new challenges

Post-Stroke Exercise Videos

The American Stroke Association has a series of post-stroke exercise videos available online. Seven of these videos are specifically designed to improve balance. [Access the series here.](#)

Community Programs

Ask your health care team or social worker about local programs and resources:

- » Hospital or rehabilitation facility balance-training or fall prevention programs
- » Stroke support groups that include fun and helpful activities



Remember:

Recovery takes time, and every small step forward matters. Be patient with yourself, stay consistent, and celebrate your progress along the way.

Additional Resources

- » [Home Safety Checklist](#)
- » [Caregiver Tips for Fall Prevention](#)
- » [Fear of Falling Fact Sheet](#)

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