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October 2010

## October 2010 News

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## One Leg Standing Balance--Test Yourself

A multitude of injuries and occurrences can affect our balance and leave us less steady on our feet. We also lose stability as a result of the normal aging pattern. A good test of balance is the "Single Leg Stance," also known as standing on one leg.

Standing on one leg requires the use of many of your body's systems. Balancing on one leg requires leg strength, static balance, and integration of vision, inner ear, and other receptors in your muscles and joints. The Single Leg Stance Test is being used as a tool to identify people who may be at risk for falling. It is also being used as an exercise to improve balance and prevent falls. As described in our last newsletter, researcher Carmen Abbott PT, PhD has identified several areas which are affected by the aging process and can contribute to fall risk, single leg standing is one of them. This study is unique because its participants were from various age groups starting at age 20. **This information is relevant for those far below the considered fall risk age of 65.**

### Test Yourself

1. Stand in front of a sink or sturdy chair for safety.
2. Have a friend use a stop watch or clock with a second hand to time.
3. Cross your arms.
4. Lift one leg off the floor and start timing.
5. Hold (for up to 30 seconds)

Stop timing if you have to put your foot down, uncross your arms, or lean more than 30 degrees.

Repeat the test on both legs.

Try again, but close your eyes (this is very difficult)

### **Researchers from the University of Missouri have established norms for Single Leg Stance for different ages:**

	<b>EYES OPEN</b>	<b>EYES CLOSED</b>
20-29:	29 seconds	21 seconds
30-39:	29 seconds	14 seconds
40-49:	29 seconds	10 seconds
50-59:	28 seconds	8 seconds
60-69:	26 seconds	5 seconds
70-79:	14 seconds	4 seconds

This is the fourth article in a series of articles which presents information and exercises to prevent falls in all ages. [To access the previous article, click here.](#)

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### **Exercise of the Month: One Leg Standing**



The single leg stance is a very effective exercise for improving balance. This exercise can be made more challenging as your balance gets better.

#### **Single Leg Stance:**

Stand behind a sturdy chair or in front of the sink.

Hold onto the chair back or sink with both hands. Slowly lift one leg off the ground. Maintain your balance standing on one leg for 15 seconds.

Return to starting position and repeat X 3.

Perform with opposite leg.

#### **When that gets easy, progress the difficulty:**

Increase the time you hold up your leg to 30 seconds.

Only hold onto the chair or sink with one hand, then lift leg.

Fold your arms across your chest and then lift leg, keeping balance (be ready to hold onto chair or sink if you lose your balance).

**Hardest:** Fold arms across chest, close eyes, then lift leg--keep eyes closed and try to balance.

[To access last month's "Exercise of the Month," click here.](#)

## October is Physical Therapy Month

National Physical Therapy Month is hosted by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and is recognized every October by APTA's more than 74,000 members — physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students of physical therapy nationwide.



Each year the APTA honors the ways that physical therapists help restore and improve motion in people's lives. This year's theme is the importance of physical activity for people of all ages and abilities in preventing and combating obesity and its consequences.

Physical therapists can help patients reduce pain, avoid injury, and improve or restore mobility — in many cases reducing the need for prescription medications and helping patients avoid expensive surgery.

Learn more about conditions physical therapists treat at [www.moveforwardpt.com](http://www.moveforwardpt.com). You may also follow APTA on [Twitter](#) (@moveforwardpt) and [Facebook](#).

## Mobile Physical Therapy Information

Mobile Physical Therapy provides physical therapy services to seniors and others in their homes. Our services are covered by Medicare Part B, PPO's, some private insurances, and private pay. Our office can verify benefit coverage prior to beginning treatments.



[Click here for a referral form, or call us at 314-558-1385.](#)

## Help Wanted



Mobile Physical Therapy is looking for help! We are looking for a physical therapist on an as needed or part-time basis to see patients in their homes. If you are interested in providing excellent home care services and having a flexible schedule, contact us at 314-558-1385.

Mobile Physical Therapy • 935 Morrison Avenue • Saint Louis • MO • 63104

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