

Project Title

For Older Adults: Exercises to Improve Balance Mobility and Strength

Sponsoring Organizations

1. Continuing Care Division of Catholic Health System
2. Chi Time

Summary of Program

Exercise focused on improving the strength and balance of older adults has a powerful impact on reducing falls risk. Although there are many forms of exercise to choose from this DVD focuses on two, Tai Chi and a balance and strength exercise routine.

Tai chi is a slow, flowing exercise regimen with origins in traditional Chinese medicine and the martial arts. Known health benefits include relaxation, improved sleep quality, enhanced immune response, improved balance, pain management, maintenance of functional strength and joint flexibility. There is research evidence suggesting that regular practice of tai chi as a mind/body exercise modality can also result in improved cognitive functioning, memory, vitality and mood.

The Chi Time (tai chi) exercise routines demonstrated are considered mild intensity exercise and suitable for all ages and can accommodate a wide range of physical and intellectual abilities. The Chi Time (tai chi) portion of the Tool Kit Exercise DVD runs approximately 75 minutes and is organized into four chapters: a 'how to' chapter which includes expert instruction and three easy-to-follow exercise routines. Both sitting and standing routines are included.

The second portion of this DVD is focused on a specific exercise routine geared towards improve strength and mobility in older adults. Viewers are given the choice of 3 levels of intensity for each of the exercises. These exercises are suitable for all ages and should always be started on the easiest level before attempting to progress to the harder versions. This section of the DVD supports another toolkit item title the Safety Assessment and Falls Education (SAFE) Program.

Impact on Falls Prevention

Both types of exercises were utilized with older adults in community-based settings. Through the implementation of tai chi or the SAFE Program a reduction in reported falls, and falls risk was reported.