

Posture & Balance, Nordic Walking, Strengthening, and Stretching Routine

Posture & balance warm up (3-5 minutes) – Choose from a selection of these exercises to be done at the beginning of your routine. For balance exercises, loosely grip the poles and only rely on them for balance as little as possible.

Posture with poles – Stand tall in your best posture. Balance weight evenly between both feet. Roll your shoulders up and backwards, and then push them down. Gently pull your belly in and pull your chest up. Look straight ahead and tuck in your chin. Breathe while holding this position. Keep this posture while walking and push the poles firmly into the ground so they make a sound.



Shoulder rolls – Move your shoulders in a circular pattern. Start with a few shoulder rolls forwards and end with large exaggerated rolls backwards. This promotes good posture by opening the chest muscles and pulling the shoulders back. 10 repetitions each side.

Toe-to-heel balance – With your feet close together, slowly rock forward onto your toes and then slowly rock backwards onto your heels. Go slow and maintain control of your movements and maintain a standing posture without bending at the hip throughout this exercise. Do this for 30 seconds.



Single-leg balance – With your feet shoulder width apart, stand on one leg and hold. Slowly lift your leg out in front of you, back behind you, and out to the side. Go slow and maintain control of your movements and good posture throughout this exercise. Do this for 30 seconds each leg.

Nordic Walking (15-45 min)

Week 1-3: 15-20 minutes

- Walk at your own pace.
- Peer and student trainers will provide encouragement and tips for technique emphasizing the posture, such as looking straight ahead.

Week 4-6: 20-30 minutes

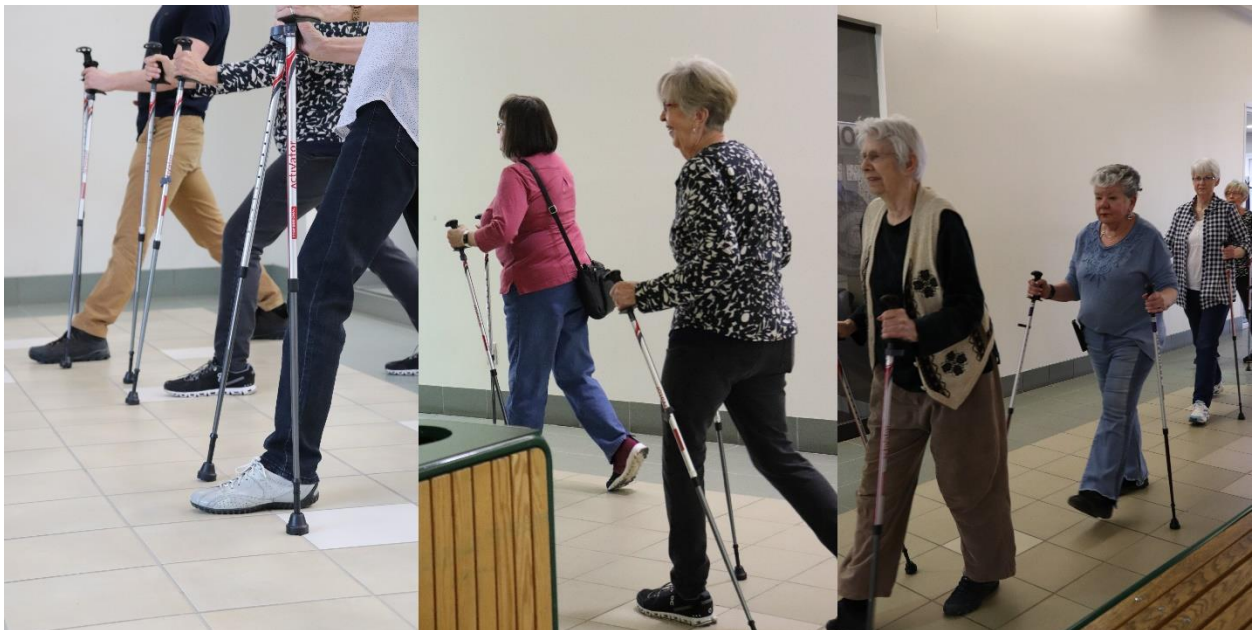
- Walk at your own pace.
- Emphasize good posture while walking.
- The poles should make a sound when they hit the ground.
- Grip the poles lightly to prevent tension and pain on hands, wrists or shoulders.
- Peer and student trainers will provide encouragement and tips for technique.

Week 7-9: 30-35 minutes

- Walk at your own pace.
- Peer and student trainers will provide encouragement and tips for technique.

Week 10-12: 35-45 minutes

- Walk at your own pace. Peer and student trainers will provide encouragement and tips for technique.



Strengthening (3-5 minutes) – Strength exercises will follow your walk.

Week 1-3: aim for 5-8 squats and lunges
Week 4-6: aim for 9-12
Week 7-9: aim for 7-9, rest, repeat 7-9
Week 10-12: 10-12, rest, repeat 10-12

Squats – With feet shoulder width apart, and your poles in front of you, slowly lower your bottom by sticking it out behind you and keeping your core muscles tight. Lower yourself as far as you feel comfortable and then slowly rise back up to standing. Try not to have your knees go beyond your toes. If this happens, try pushing your bottom back further.



Lunges – With feet shoulder width apart, take a large step forward with your poles in front of you. Slowly lower yourself down as far as you feel comfortable, but not beyond a 90° angle for both knees. Try not to have your front knee go beyond your toes and maintain an upright torso with good posture (no leaning forward). If your knee is too far forward, try taking a larger step forward before beginning the exercise. Switch legs and repeat the same number of lunges.

Stretching (3-5 minutes) – Stretches will be held for about 30 seconds.

Calf stretch – With your legs shoulder width apart, step forward into the top position of a lunge. Straighten your back leg and push your heel into the ground. Slightly lean forward for a deeper stretch. Switch and repeat on the other side.



Hip flexor stretch – With your legs should width apart, step forward into the top position of a lunge. Push your hips forward and hold this stretch while maintaining an upright torso. Switch and repeat on the other side.

Hamstring and lower back stretch – While maintaining proper posture and using the poles for support, bend forward and downward at the waist. Actively push your bottom out behind you to feel the stretch in the back of your legs.





Chest stretch – Hold your poles on the ground out to your sides and slightly behind you until you feel a gentle chest stretch. Keep an upright posture and try not to shrug your shoulders.

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