



Q: What are the evidence-based fall prevention programs in NC encouraged through Healthy Aging NC?

A: Otago

The Otago Exercise Program (Otago) is an individualized balance and strength fall prevention program that is delivered by a physical therapist over the course of 52 weeks. Otago was developed and tested by the New Zealand Falls Prevention Research Group and is part of ongoing work at UNC Chapel Hill. Because this program is delivered by a licensed physical therapist, it is only available via certain clinicians within North Carolina. For further information, or to find an Otago physical therapist near you, please click the link below:

<https://www.med.unc.edu/aging/cgec/exercise-program>

A Matter of Balance

A Matter of Balance (AMOB) is an eight session structured group intervention that utilizes a variety of activities to address physical, social and cognitive factors affecting fear of falling and to teach fall prevention strategies. The activities include group discussion, problem-solving, skill building, assertiveness training, videos, practical solutions and exercise training. Each of the sessions is two hours in length, including a break for light snacks.* These eight sessions can meet twice a week for four weeks, or once a week for eight weeks. The exercise component, which begins in the third session, takes about 30 minutes of the session to complete. ****Title III D funds are permitted to be used for snacks during the AMOB program.***

<https://healthyagingnc.com/a-matter-of-balance-fall-prevention/>

<https://mainehealth.org/healthy-communities/healthy-aging/matter-of-balance>

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention

Developed by Dr. Paul Lam at the [Tai Chi for Health Institute](#) (TCHI), the program utilizes Tai Chi's Sun style for its ability to improve relaxation, balance and its ease of use for older adults.

The movements are taught to both left and right sides and with turns to move forward and backward to improve mobility and offer a variety of combinations. Movements are performed at a higher stance to make it easier for older participants and those with arthritis. Movements can be modified to accommodate mobility issues for any participant.

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention is led by a TCHI Board certified instructor, with each session including warm-up and cool-down exercises, one or two movements per lesson, progressively leading to completing the six basic core and six advanced movements, breathing techniques, and Tai Chi principles including those relating to improving physical and mental balance.

Classes supported by Healthy Aging NC meet for 20 1-hour sessions and participants are expected to attend a minimum of **16 hours of tai chi lessons for the fall prevention benefit**. This can be accomplished by attending one hour per week for 16 weeks or two hours per week for eight weeks. Participants are also encouraged to practice the tai chi program at home for about 30 minutes daily, at least four days per week, for the greatest benefit.

The Tai Chi for Health Institute's specific Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention course is proven to help reduce falls by improving balance, stamina and awareness. It is also proven to reduce the symptoms of arthritis!

<https://healthyagingnc.com/tai-chi-for-arthritis-and-fall-prevention/>

<https://taichiforhealthinstitute.org/programs/tai-chi-for-fall-prevention/>

YMCA: Moving for Better Balance

Developed by researchers at the Oregon Research Institute, Moving for Better Balance is a 12-week evidence-based falls prevention program that uses the principles and movements of Tai Chi to help older adults increase their strength, improve their balance, and increase their confidence in doing everyday activities.

The program consists of a core eight-form routine and a subroutine of eight integrated therapeutic movements forms that have been derived from the traditional 24-form Yang-style of Tai Chi, progressing from easy to more difficult which collectively involve a set of simple, rhythmic Tai Chi-based actions.

Led by a Moving for Better Balance trained instructor, this program focuses on improving mental cognitive and physical functional ability especially balance to reduce fall-related risks and fall frequency. Sessions take place twice a week for 60 minutes, and continue for 12 weeks,

supplemented by a 30-minute weekly at-home practice by each program participant. Participants attain the fall prevention benefit once they reach 50 hours of practice.

<https://healthyagingnc.com/tai-ji-quan-classes-available/>

<https://healthyagingnc.com/external-programs/>

<https://www.ncymcaalliance.org/content/moving-better-balance-falls-prevention>

YMCA: Enhance Fitness

Enhance® Fitness is a 16-week exercise program for older adults that uses simple, easy-to-learn movements that motivate individuals (particularly those with arthritis) to stay active throughout their life. Each class session includes cardiovascular, strength training, flexibility, and balance exercises and the fostering of strong social relationships between participants. The program meets 3 times a week for 60 minutes and is led by certified instructors.

<https://healthyagingnc.com/external-programs/>

<https://www.ncymcaalliance.org/content/enhance-fitness>

Q: Why are the hour requirements for the two Tai Chi programs different?

A: Tai Chi for Arthritis and YMCA: Moving for Better Balance are two different forms of Tai Chi. Studies for each have established the individual hour requirements based on how many hours of practice it takes to reach fall prevention benefit. More in depth guidance for each program can be found [here](#) on the National Council on Aging's website.

Q: How/why do I document that my participants are meeting the 16 hour requirement for Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention?

A: Data collection forms for Tai Chi for Arthritis and other programs can be found here at Healthy Aging NC's [Leader Resource page](#).

While we understand that different facilities may offer this program in slightly different formats, we are able to offer technical assistance and data collection for those who are able to document the 16 hour requirement. Data collection is reported to the National Council on Aging's national database and helps to tell the story of Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention

in North Carolina. This makes the program more attractive to potential funders, and allows individual organizations at both the state and local levels to evaluate the effectiveness of this program in their communities. For help troubleshooting how to meet the 16 hour requirement, please contact Healthy Aging NC's Fall Prevention Program Manager: (828) 255-7072 or email: ebailey@unca.edu

Q: How do I become a leader in any of these programs?

A: Otago Exercise Program is led by a trained physical therapist (PT). Physical therapists and physical therapy assistants can take an online training that qualifies as a Continuing Education Credit. More information about this training can be found at: <https://www.med.unc.edu/aging/cgec/exercise-program>

A Matter of Balance requires master trainers who do fidelity monitoring of coaches who lead the programs in their communities. Master Trainers hold licenses for the program and manage coach lists and training schedules. For more information on becoming a Master Trainer, visit the national dissemination page:

<https://mainehealth.org/healthy-communities/healthy-aging/matter-of-balance>

<https://mainehealth.org/healthy-communities/healthy-aging/matter-of-balance/master-trainer-session-information>

To identify a master trainer in your region please contact Healthy Aging NC:

healthyagingncinfo@gmail.com A Matter of Balance coaches are often volunteer lay leaders from the community. Coaches are usually asked to sign an agreement with their master trainers to coach a minimum of 2 sessions within a year after being trained. If you are interested in being a coach for this program in your community check for a [coach training near you](#) on our website.

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention is taught by a Tai Chi for Health Institute trained instructor. For a listing of trainings, trainers, or instructors in your area visit the Tai Chi for Health Institute page to find a [Master Trainer workshop](#) in your area or check for an [upcoming training](#) on our website.

YMCA: Moving for Better Balance and Enhance Fitness leader trainings are disseminated through the YMCA organization. In North Carolina, people interested in this program can contact the state program trainer: Diane Saccone at: (828) 575 2904 or dsaccone@ymcawnc.org.

www.healthyagingnc.com



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