

How to Fix Balance Problems after Stroke

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Balance problems after stroke are a very common side effect. For those who don't quite understand why, we'll talk about the cause of this issue first. Then we'll move on to the good stuff: the balance exercises that will help you get back to life as it was before.

Causes of Balance Problems after Stroke

When a stroke occurs on one side of the brain, it will affect the opposite side of the body while the other side remains mostly unaffected.

This means that as you walk, which involves equal use of both sides of the body, one side of your body isn't cooperating as much as the other. This will create issues with stability – a post stroke side effect that you can absolutely fix!

Rehab Exercises to Improve Balance after Stroke

Most balance rehab exercises will focus on both unilateral and bilateral movements. During unilateral movements, you'll be exercising one side of the body while your core and other muscles

stabilize your body as a whole. Then during bilateral movements, you'll use both sides of your body to really strengthen your legs and core.

Beginner:

To work on your balance with some gentle rehab exercises, try starting out with some **seated balance exercises**.

Intermediate:

A strong core is essential for good balance. While you're mastering those seated balance exercises, add these **5 core exercises** to the mix.

Or if you're feeling adventurous, check out these **5 tai chi exercises** in article dated February 13, 2017 titled "**5 Tai Chi Exercises to Improve Balance and Reduce Stress After Stroke**". They help improve balance and decrease stress – and they're made specifically for stroke recovery!

Advanced:

Once you can perform those seated balance exercises with ease, move on to our more **challenging balance exercises** in article "**Balance Exercises for Stroke Patients**" dated September 18, 2015. Honestly, they aren't too tough – until you incorporate the options that make each exercise more difficult. (You're welcome.)

Reclaiming Balance with Yoga – No Flexibility Required

There are gentle forms of yoga that most stroke survivors can greatly benefit from. Yoga isn't about contorting your body into crazy shapes. It's about finding *balance* in your body and mind.

If you want to try yoga to improve your balance after stroke, ease your way into it. Start off by trying **simple poses** while using a chair for support. Then as your balance and strength improves, you can move to the mat.

Here's a great resource from Yoga Journal. Visit www.yogajournal.com/article/practice-session/yoga-for-stroke-survivors/.

Exactly How Far Have You Come?

Perhaps the most motivating thing during stroke recovery is *witnessing your own improvement*. And the best way to do that is through the single leg stand test.

Simply stand behind a chair and place both hands on the back rest. Then time yourself as you stand on one foot for as long as you can.

Do this balance test every week and record it in your stroke recovery journal (because you have one right? It's really important!). Then when you see your progress over the months, you'll know *exactly how far you've come!*