Balance Checklist

Balance can be defined as the ability to the control the body's center of mass or center of gravity over the base of support whether stationary or moving.

Good Posture is critical to good balance. When the body is correctly aligned, movement is more efficient and more stable. To establish good posture:

- ☐ Stand with your back against the wall, feet flat on the floor with the heels approximately 3 to 4 inches or less from the wall.
- ☐ Hold your head erect with the chin parallel to the floor, vision focused on a target at eye level.
- ☐ Relax the arms and shoulders.
- ☐ The buttocks, shoulder blades and, if possible, the back of the head should be touching the wall. Focus on keeping chin parallel with the floor and the eyes focused on the target.

Make sure the weight is evenly distributed throughout the whole foot, front to back and side to side, with all the toes on the floor helping with balance. Abdominals are pulled in, and the chest lifted. Hold the position for 15 to 30 seconds with eyes open and 15 to 30 seconds with eyes closed

Other elements that are critical to good balance include:

- ☐ Lower body strength (leg muscles/base of support), which can be improved with chair squats and/or stationary lunges.
- ☐ Core strength (abdominals, chest and back muscles/center of gravity), which can be improved with abdominal and back exercises or Pilates mat work.
- ☐ Lower body and ankle flexibility, which can be improved with a daily stretch for the calf and hamstring muscles, along with ankle flexing, toe pointing and ankle rotation.

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