

# Balancing Act!

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## Reducing Fractures with Exercise

Older women who are looking to improve gait and avoid hip fractures may only need 20 minutes of daily home exercise to reduce their risk.

A study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* (September 27, 2010) followed 160 women with osteopenia (lower than normal bone mineral density, but not low enough to be osteoporosis) for seven years. The women were aged 70-73 at the beginning of the study.



The women were placed into two groups. One group exercised daily for 20 minutes at home and participated in 6 months of supervised weekly training each year for 5 years. No information was given about the type of exercise performed. The second group did not exercise. Comparing the two groups, the exercise group walked more quickly and showed greater signs of strength and stability. They also showed a 32% drop in fracture risk.

At the end of 7 years, 100 women (55 exercisers, 45 non-exercisers) were available for follow-up testing. Among all the women in the study, those who had engaged in moderate physical activity throughout their lives were 78% less likely to have experienced a fracture. And yet both exercise and non-exercise groups showed similar decreases in bone mineral density over time.

“Mainly home-based exercises followed by voluntary home training seem to have long-term effect on balance and gait and may even protect high-risk women from hip fractures,” stated the study authors.

If you believe you may be at risk for osteopenia or osteoporosis and are looking to create a home-based exercise program to improve your balance and gait – contact me for a no-obligation consultation today!