

Physical Therapy Can Help

Balance & Multiple Sclerosis

Information for Patients and Families

Balance problems and falls are a safety concern! Over half of people with MS report falling in the last year.

Physical therapy has been shown to...

- **Improve balance**
- **Decrease falls**
- **Decrease fatigue**
- **Improve mobility**

Find a board-certified neurological specialist Physical Therapist:

<http://www.abpts.org/findaspecialist>

Or visit UCSF Faculty Practice:

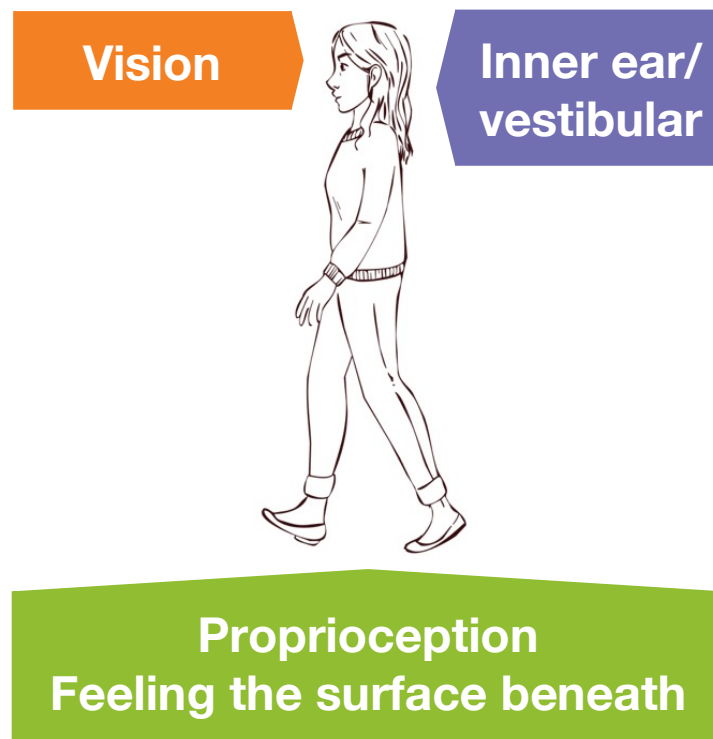
Locations in Mission Bay, Mount Zion, Lakeshore

Other Community Resources:

Adaptive Yoga at YMCA SF

<https://www.ymcasf.org/>

Your body uses three systems to maintain your balance...one or more of these systems can be impaired in people with MS



These systems are often impaired in people with MS, which can make it hard to walk at night, turn, and walk when changing surfaces (e.g. concrete to grass)

Do You Have Balance Problems?

YES

**Do you use furniture to steady yourself?
Do you feel unbalanced when turning?**

YES

Consult a neuro-PT for guidance

NO

To improve your balance, try the exercises on page 2

SOMETIMES

You could benefit from PT. Try the exercises on page 3

NO

Challenge yourself with the exercises on page 4

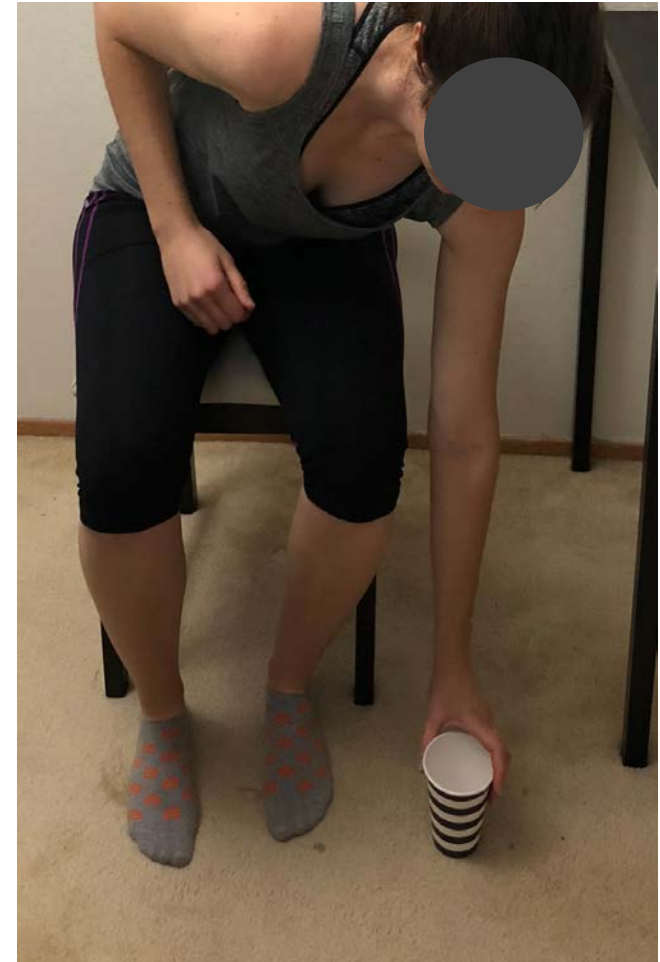
Beginner Exercises



Reach to same side



Reach across



Reach to floor

Medium Exercises



Stand feet together



Stand heel to toe



Stand on compliant surface*

* This is an unstable surface – for example a rolled-up yoga matt or sofa cushion

Challenging Exercises



Standing march



Heel-toe walk

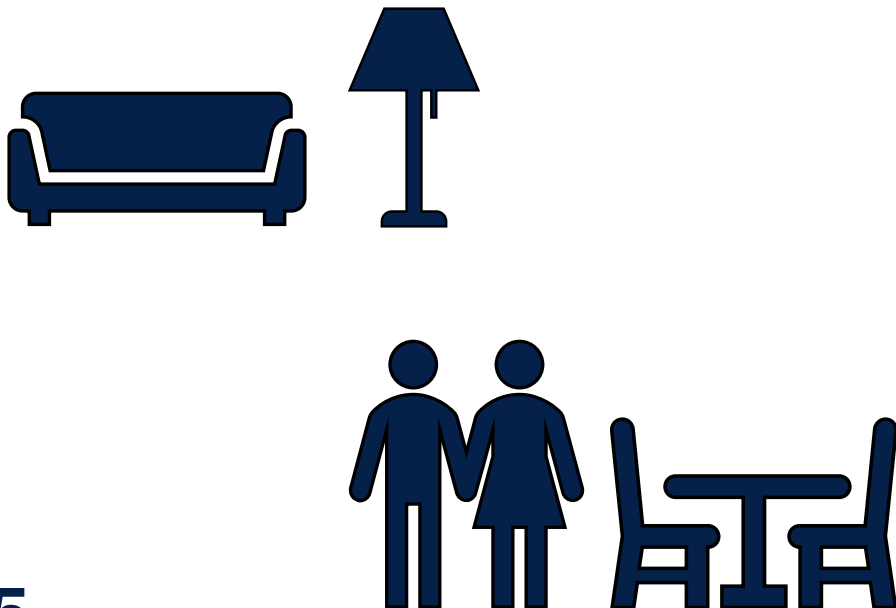


**Head turns
while walking**

Remember: This information is not meant to replace medical advice!

See your PT if...

- These exercises are too easy or too challenging
- You haven't fallen, but are constantly worried you will fall
- You're unsure which exercises to do
- You have any questions!



Safety tips:

- Sit in a stable chair
- Wear non-skid shoes
- Start with stable surface exercises
- Keep a stable, sturdy chair or table nearby in case of loss of balance
- Always have a caregiver or friend around for support