



## How fit am I?

As we grow older our strength, balance and general fitness is in danger of declining so much so that we put ourselves at risk of falls, something we all wish to avoid.

If you want to know how fit you are and to test your balance here a few tests you can do yourself.

**Walking distance** – are you able to comfortably walk:

- across the road
- around the house
- in your garden
- one block in the street
- more than four blocks

**Not** being able to walk round the block from your home is one indicator for increased risk of falling.



**Get up and go test** – start by sitting down on a dining type chair. Record how long it takes you to:

rise to standing  
walk three metres (10 feet)  
turn  
walk back  
sit down

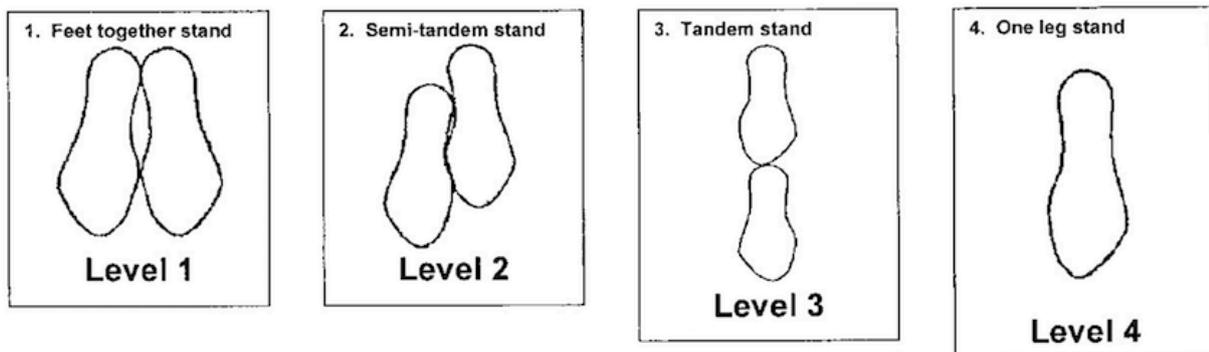
Try it again in a month's time. A change of result by more than four seconds can indicate a change in the level of mobility.

- eg
- six seconds slower - weaker/less confident mobility
  - six seconds faster - stronger/more confident mobility which is what you want

## Balance test

This test has four levels of increasing difficulty and should be done without assistance. We advise you have someone with you while you do the test.

- Wear flat shoes
- Stand next to a chair but do not hold on to it, unless you lose your balance
- Position feet as shown (4 different levels)
- Try standing **without** support for 10 seconds starting at Level 1 moving through the levels.
- If unable to assume the foot position or hold a level for 10 seconds – **do not** progress to the next level as your balance is not good enough and you may fall, put zero as the score for the next level/s.



**Scoring** - Note down how long you hold each position

Your score

Level 1	Feet together stand	/ 10 seconds
Level 2	Semi-tandem stand	/ 10 seconds
Level 3	Tandem stand	/ 10 seconds
Level 4	One leg stand	/ 10 seconds
<b>Total</b>		<b>/ 40 seconds</b>

Score of:     *under 20 seconds*     *very poor balance*  
                   *20 – 30 seconds*     *poor balance*  
                   *30 – 35 seconds*     *moderately good balance*  
                   *35 - 40 seconds*     *good balance*

## Leg strength test



- Level 1 stand up with arms crossed if possible  
or use a hand to push up  
or use two hands to push up
- Level 2 stand up taking 5 seconds from when your bottom is off the seat
- Level 3 sit down taking 10 seconds until your bottom touches the seat
- Level 4 sit down, stopping half way down, hold 5 seconds, then continue to sit
- Level 5 sit down stopping about 5 cm from the seat, hold 5 seconds, then continue to sit

5 centimetres

### Scoring

	Your score
<b>Level 1</b>	
Stand and sit	
arms crossed 5 points	/ 5
one hand to push up 3 points	
two hands to push up 1 point	
<b>Level 2</b>	
Stand taking 5 seconds ( <i>score number of seconds held</i> )	/ 5
<b>Level 3</b>	
Sit taking 5 seconds ( <i>score number of seconds held</i> )	/ 5
<b>Level 4</b>	
Sit and stop half way down – hold 5 seconds ( <i>score number of seconds held</i> )	/ 5
<b>Level 5</b>	
Sit and Stop when about 10 cms from the seat – hold 5 seconds Then continue to sit ( <i>score number of seconds held</i> )	/ 5
<b>Total</b>	<b>/ 25</b>

<i>Score of:</i>	<i>under 10 seconds</i>	<i>very poor leg strength</i>
	<i>15 seconds</i>	<i>poor leg strength</i>
	<i>20 seconds</i>	<i>moderate leg strength</i>
	<i>25 seconds</i>	<i>good leg strengths</i>
	<i>40 seconds</i>	<i>good balance</i>

If you scored poorly on any of these tests, it's time to take action!!  
See our How to Stay Fit and Active as You Grown Older information page.

Our friendly physiotherapist can help just contact Therapy Professionals Ltd on  
Phone: 03 377 5280      Email: admin@tpl.nz