

**Parkwood Institute
Acquired Brain Injury
Outpatient Program
Tip sheet**



Static balance training

Purpose:

This exercise will help improve your balance and stability.

Starting Position:

Start in a standing position. The more narrow your support base (closer your feet are together), the harder the exercise will be. Here is a list from easiest to hardest starting positions:

- 1) Feet close together
- 2) Feet in stride stance – one ahead of the other
- 3) Feet in tandem stance – like you are standing on a tightrope
- 4) Single leg stance

Pick a position that is challenging and practice until you can hold it for 20-30 seconds, then add movement and or pick a harder challenge. Combine different options but remember – safety first – don't fall. Take a break if your symptoms increase.

Pick a surface:

Increase the challenge by balancing on an unstable surface such as grass, a pillow, a couch cushion, a foam pad (Airex pad is best), wobble board, rocker board or BOSU ball (A BOSU Balance Trainer or BOSU ball is a specially modified stability ball cut in half.)

Add movement:

Balance requires more than just standing still, you need to be able to move other body parts and still maintain balance. Here is a list from easiest to hardest movements:

- 1) Alternate between lifting up one arm, then the other, then both arms at the same time
- 2) Move your eyes up and down, then left to right
- 3) Turn your head up and down, then left to right, then diagonally

Single leg stance exercises:

- 4) Slowly move your free leg forward and back like you are running
- 5) Turn your knee out without rotating your body
- 6) Move your opposite arm and opposite leg like you are running
- 7) Same as step six but add a head turn