

# WELLNESS QUARTERLY

well-being news, advice, and opinions from christie gardens staff and residents

Winter 2022



## Mona Babb: Tis the Season to be Safe

I decided to focus this issue on Falls Prevention — though it was more than a little bit tempting to focus on the holidays, entertaining, shopping, decorating, gifts, or music — because these are the subjects that occupy our attention at this time of year!

I hope you had a chance to attend our recent Falls Prevention seminar hosted by the Health and Wellness team. Our seminar featured our CareRX pharmacy consultant, Life Line, and our own Physiotherapy and Fitness team members who shared their expertise on the extra steps you can take to keep safe. These simple tips from wearing the right footwear to having clear paths in your home can make such a difference.

The data we have on falls tells us that Falls Prevention needs to be top-of-mind, with 1 in 3 elders experiencing a fall every year, and half of those prone to additional falls.

Fitness and strengthening programs have proven to increase your balance and mobility along with other interventions such as good nutrition, proper fit and use of your mobility aids, and medication management. You'll find more information on these tips in this issue.

Speaking of the holidays, Peter and the Dining team have been busy getting us ready with our Christmas Market, and the Community Life team have put on Holly Sales and our annual Open House. It feels great to be able to return to these traditions.

The Health and Wellness team wishes you all happy holidays filled with fond memories and good food.

See you all in the New Year. Be Safe.

**Mona Babb, RN**  
Director of Health and Wellness

## in this issue ...

**Mona Babb:**

Tis the Season to be Safe

**Body Mechanics:**

Fitness and Independence

**TIPS from TENA:**

Fall Prevention

**TIPS from Motion:**

Caregiver Fatigue

**christie  
gardens**  
a community you can have faith in



## TIP: Fall Prevention

**DID YOU KNOW?** The World Health Organization defines a fall as: an incident where a person inadvertently comes to rest on the ground or lower surface. Falls can happen anytime, anywhere and to anyone regardless of age.<sup>1</sup>

However, the elderly and in particular those residing in nursing homes facilities are most at risk.<sup>2</sup> The consequences of a fall can include various morbidities<sup>3</sup> including hip fractures leading to hospital admission, loss of dignity, quality of life and confidence.<sup>4</sup>

When an elderly person falls their general activity is reduced drastically, often resulting in further fear of falling, muscular weakness and functional decline.<sup>4</sup>

### Causes of falls

- Over 400 separate risk factors<sup>5</sup> for falls have been defined.
- The single most frequent risk is age – the older the person the more frequent the incidence of reported falls.<sup>6</sup>
- Within a care home setting, the risk of falling increases dramatically; almost half of the resident living in residential care will fall each year.<sup>7</sup>
- Poorly fitting footwear, long clothing and unsuitable appliances (including walking aids, orthosis and prosthesis not in working order) all add to intrinsic risk conditions.
- Medication in particular, hypnotic, (sedating), antidepressant drugs, and polypharmacy (the use of three or more medications) can increase the risk of falls.<sup>6</sup>

#### Fall risk factors

- Previous falls
- Muscle weakness
- Medication and polypharmacy
- Disturbed vision or balance
- Poorly fitting footwear
- Cognitive impairment
- Gait and balance impairment
- Incontinence
- Sleep disturbance<sup>8</sup>

### Auditing for risk prevention

- The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) (2017) advise a thorough assessment to determine risk factors and appropriate interventions.<sup>8</sup>
- Intervention strategies that specifically address the individualized multi-factorial findings of the assessment are then recommended. These may include: strength and balance training, hazard assessment, vision assessment and medication review.<sup>5</sup>

### Environmental factors

While environmental risk factors are many, not all are obvious. Regular checks of areas that can become wet or slippery should be assessed. Removing clutter and obstacles will also help to prevent falls.

#### TENA® TIP:

There is a fine balance between minimizing fall-risks and allowing residents to be as independent as possible. Risk assessment should include residents, staff, family members and the multi disciplinary team and visitors and be continuous, not just a 'oneoff' event.





## Ideas and Suggestions from motioncares.ca

### Entry and Exit

To avoid falls in your home, you need to start at entryways and exits. Things like a broken railing or an unstable or steep walkway can lead to dangerous falls. To help protect you, Motion has safety options available for entryways and exits, such as ramps and vertical platform lifts, to reduce the risks.

### Bathroom and Bedroom Safety Products

There is nothing Motion wants more than our clients to feel protected from falls in their homes, especially in their bedrooms and in the bathroom where surfaces can become slippery due to water.

By introducing grab bars, a toilet safety frame, a hand-held shower, or a bathtub chair in the bathroom, the risk of falls is significantly decreased.

And in the bedroom, where people want to feel safe and secure, products like height-adjustable beds, support and transfer devices like foam or air-filled mattresses and bed rails can make the world of difference.

### Living Areas

The living area is where we all go to relax after a long day. For some, especially seniors, the living room can prove to be a hazardous space when they are trying to get around.

Things you might not even think about like a low couch, unsecured throw rug, electrical cords, or the edge of a glass-top table can be hazardous and cause falls. Motion can help build a safe living space with products like power lift recliners (or lift-out recliner chairs), furniture risers, or a walker/rollator to provide stability.

To learn more about fall prevention products please visit our website at [motioncares.ca](http://motioncares.ca) or contact our Mobility Accessibility Consultant:

### Jennifer Andrew

[jennifer.andrew@motioncares.ca](mailto:jennifer.andrew@motioncares.ca), 416-751-9216.



## Health and Wellness Team: Contact Information

**Amanda in the Wellness Centre**  
(416) 530-1330 extension 250  
[amanda@christiegardens.org](mailto:amanda@christiegardens.org)



**Mona Babb, RN**  
Director of Health and Wellness  
(416) 530-1330 extension 237  
[mona@christiegardens.org](mailto:mona@christiegardens.org)



**Alicia Christopher**  
Health and Wellness Team Leader  
(416) 530-1330 extension 245  
[alicia@christiegardens.org](mailto:alicia@christiegardens.org)



**Ashley MacDonald**  
Assisted Living Advocate  
(416) 530-1330 extension 302  
[ashley@christiegardens.org](mailto:ashley@christiegardens.org)

# Body Mechanics: Independence and Fitness - what's the big idea?

For those of you participating in the Christie Gardens fitness program, you will have often heard Alfie and I talking about the importance of exercising to maintain independence.

**Our primary goal is to help keep you moving as effectively as possible, for as long as possible.**

A key part of that goal is the need to improve balance for the sake of reducing the likelihood of falls. Whether you attend one of our many fitness classes, work one-on-one with our personal trainers, or follow our independent programming, it all boils down to two basic elements: nutrition and exercise.

Using exercise to help maintain independence and reduce falls is central to your Christie Fitness program. With a primary focus on strength, we target legs, hips, and core using challenging and dynamic movements in a safe environment. We also focus on balance training, agility work, and range of motion — all in support of overall fitness.

From a nutritional standpoint the foods that we eat have a direct impact on our strength, energy levels, and even our concentration. To start, portion control and food selection are essential to our energy levels.

For example, eating a meal comprised mostly of carbohydrates can be so quickly absorbed that we may suffer from a sudden drop in energy to the point of wobbly legs and loss of focus and coordination. This can lead to falls.

Conversely, eating a meal that is high in protein and high fibre foods such as fruits and vegetables will reduce the absorption rate of the carbs, thus establishing a longer energy wave with less spiking.

**In other words, eating balanced meals will just make us feel better.**

We also encourage residents to use supporting aids such as nordic poles as they will also provide a huge benefit to outdoor walking stability. As a bonus, using poles will help with posture, increase our gait, and improve our cardio conditioning.

**Remaining independent is a multi-faceted endeavour.**

Your fitness team is here to help in any way and guide you along this path of fitness improvement. If you are not yet sure where to start, simply book a consultation with us through the Wellness Centre. We can sit down with you, determine your needs and provide a program tailored for you.

We look forward to our journey together!

**Jeff Dubé, BSc, PTS, ATC**  
Fitness Program Coordinator



600 Melita Crescent  
Toronto, Ontario M6G 3Z4  
(416) 530-1330  
[www.christiegardens.org](http://www.christiegardens.org)

## WELLNESS QUARTERLY

well-being news, advice, and opinions from christie gardens staff and residents

Winter 2022

Volume 8, Issue 3

Editor-in-Chief:  
Melanie Burton

Design and Art Direction:  
Jim Sweatman

Contributors:  
Mona Babb, Motion, TENA, and Jeff Dubé