

What Has Dr. Shook Been Reading?

*How To Prevent Falls, A Comprehensive Guide To Better Balance.*

By Betty Perkins-Carpenter

(Out of print)

Senior Fitness Productions, New York. (1999)

Gravity is a powerful and unrelenting force. Drop your guard for just moment, and down you go. For people over the age of 65, falling is the most common life-threatening hazard. A fall can permanently alter mobility and independence. However, falling and breaking bones need not be an inevitable consequence of ... (sigh) ... "Growing old" or rather, gaining perspective on one's youth.

Fortunately within the human body there are guardians to defend us against the powerful forces of gravity. These fine champions are known as *Balance and Muscle Tone*. And just like the rest of the body ... *use it or loose it*.

I'm serious; this can be a real problem. Ask the elders of your clan and see what they think.

Betty Perkins-Carpenter presents a series of activities designed to promote the muscle tone, balance and strength necessary for the correction of balancing errors. The exercises begin simply and as the reader becomes comfortable with each step, build in complexity. From standing holding a chair gradually progressing to steps which I found challenging to my own balance. Ms. Perkins-Carpenter realizes that falls sometimes do happen. Pointing out that a stiff body breaks and a limp body bends, she discusses the importance of developing falling skills and presents activities designed to safely develop the automatic response of controlled relaxation for when a fall does occur.

Other topics include foot heath and shoe fit, proper lighting, removing obstacles from the home, and addressing medical causes for balance problems.

*How To Prevent Falls* is full of useful information presented with simple illustrations and large print.

I recommend this book to everyone concerned about their own mobility or the mobility of someone they love.

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