






Pacific Regional Centre for Healthy Aging



AGE WELL & AVOID FRAILTY



| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <p>A</p> <p>Daily activity will help you stay mobile, flexible, and strong. Walking, weights, stairs – it's never too late to start.</p>  | <p>V</p> <p>Vaccines will help protect you from becoming seriously ill at an age where it's harder to recover.</p>  | <p>O</p> <p>Optimize your medications by reviewing them yearly with your doctor.</p>  | <p>I</p> <p>Social interaction makes you happier and helps you live longer!</p>  | <p>D</p> <p>Your diet should be nutritious and include more protein as you age to keep your bones and muscles strong.</p>  |
|---|---|---|---|--|

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: www.cfn-nce.ca/frailty-matters/avoid-frailty/

Avoiding Frailty

What is Frailty?

Effects of Frailty

Frailty Facts

Prevention

One Simple Step

Statistics

Resources

Stay Healthy by Avoiding Frailty

One of the best things we can do to stay healthy and remain independent as we age is learn about frailty. Once we understand what frailty is and how we can prevent it, we can take action to remain healthier and more independent.

What is frailty?

Frailty isn't an illness or disease—it's what happens when someone's overall health gradually gets worse.

Frailty can show up as

- Feeling weak
- Losing muscle
- Getting tired easily
- Problems with memory, clear thinking, and concentration
- Problems recovering from setbacks
- Problems doing things you used to be able to do (physically, mentally, and socially)
- Overall decline in how your body and brain function
- Unintentional weight loss

When several things on this list are combined, that is frailty.

Effects of Frailty

Older people with frailty

- Have worse outcomes when they get sick with things like the flu
- Take longer to recover from illness, falls, and injuries
- Are more likely to be hospitalized
- Are more likely to need long term care
- Are more likely to die

Frailty Facts

Frailty is not inherited. If your parents or grandparents experienced frailty, that doesn't mean you will also. Genetics plays only a very small role—less than 20%-- in whether someone experiences frailty. Lifestyle, support from the medical system, and having a supportive community all make a big difference.

We can live a long life without experiencing frailty. Evidence from scientific research shows that we don't have to die with frailty. Many of us can live productively till the end of our lives.

Frailty can affect everyone. People of all ages can experience frailty, often caused by illness, injury, or poor nutrition.

How to Prevent Frailty

You can't stop aging, but you can prevent, reverse, or slow frailty. If you don't take action, frailty typically gets worse, and that can cause serious problems. It means you will be more likely fall, get sick, need to go to hospital, need to move to a care home, and die early.

This website is your guide to preventing frailty. There is so much you can do! But no one is asking you to take this on alone—help is available. Check out the Resources throughout the site to learn about many different types of support.

The acronym AVOID highlights the main ways to prevent frailty

Activity: being active every day will help you stay mobile, flexible, and strong. You can do anything from sports and exercise to fishing to chair yoga or bed exercises.

Vaccinate: Vaccines help protect you from getting seriously ill at an age where it's harder to recover.

Optimize meds: Review your medications every year with your health care provider and make sure you are following instructions when you take them.

Interact: Being with other people and having friends and family in your life makes you happier and helps you live longer.

Diet: Choose healthy foods, including extra protein and vitamin D as you age, and drink enough fluids.

Start with One Simple Step

An effective and easy way to help yourself prevent frailty is to take a [frailty assessment](#). Frailty can in fact be measured. The assessment starts with a short quiz. The results will help you and your health care provider to know what you can work on. And then you can take the assessment again in six months and see if the numbers have improved.

Frailty by the Numbers

Over 1.6 Canadians currently live with frailty

Estimates say over 2.5 million Canadians will be living with frailty in 10 years

If no prevention takes place, a person's level of frailty will go up 4.5% each year and doubles in 15 years

A frailty prevention program which provided free health coaching over the phone showed the following improvements for participants:

- Ability to walk independently went up by 30%
- Balance improved by 29%
- Health attitude improved by 59%
- People exercised 67% more than before the program

Resources

Websites and Programs

[Canadian Frailty Network](#)

Register for a free frailty assessment and the AVOID Frailty program and find information about health care issues.

[Self-Management BC](#)

This provincial organization offers free health programs for adults of all ages with one or more ongoing health conditions. Programs are offered in person, virtually, online, by telephone, or by mail. Includes programs for Chinese, Indigenous, and Punjabi communities.

Peer Coaching

This program, run by Self-Management BC, offers one-on-one coaching using AVOID Frailty strategies to slow down and/or prevent the progression of frailty. Participants will be 65+ years old and live in the Fraser Health area. For more details contact Gurpreet Sandhu at gurpreetsandhu1@uvic.ca or 604-946-0195.

Phone Support

811 BC

This will connect you to [HealthLinkBC's health service navigators](#). They can

- Answer basic health care questions
- Help you find your way around the health care system
- Connect with a registered nurse, registered dietitian, qualified exercise professional, or pharmacist

Call 8-1-1 (7-1-1 for the deaf and hard of hearing)

Health advice and information

24 hours a day, seven days a week

Translation services are available in over 130 languages

For non-emergency situations only

Resources for First Nations and Indigenous People

[Keeping Our Nlakapamux Elders at Home](#)

Read about an initiative to keep elders engaged in their community and how it is combatting frailty

[Canadian Frailty Network: Indigenous Health](#)

Information and resources focusing on frailty and Indigenous health