



## Healthy Steps in Motion | [aging.pa.gov/wellness](http://aging.pa.gov/wellness)

### Program Synopsis

- **General Description**

Healthy Steps in Motion (HSIM) grew out of the FRIENDS (Fall Reduction Initiative: New Direction in Safety) program and Healthy Steps for Older Adults (HSOA) evidence-based education and fall risk assessment program. FRIENDS was developed in 1997 by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging to raise awareness about the risks of falling. FRIENDS had been very successful, but participants were eager for new exercises and more advanced exercises. Thus, in 2005, HSIM was developed. HSIM is a comprehensive, exercise-focused fall prevention program. Participants in HSIM enjoy more exercises including exercises for people at advanced fitness levels or that have specific medical conditions. HSIM workshops are often repeated due to the physical and social benefits participants receive from attending.

- **Program Goal**

The goal of the Healthy Steps in Motion program is to prevent falls, promote health and ensure that older adults can remain as independent as possible for as long as possible. Healthy Steps in Motion provides a participant guide based on research and best practices that reinforces the participants' education about exercise benefits, approaches and performance.

- **Essential Components and Activities**

Each Healthy Steps in Motion session has both an educational component and an exercise component. Each session builds upon the last session. At the first session, the basics of exercise, exercise safety and readiness for exercise are covered. At each subsequent session, new concepts and new exercises are introduced.

<b>Physical Skills Screening</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Welcome</li><li>○ Get Up and Go</li><li>○ Sit to Stand</li><li>○ One Leg Stand</li></ul>
<b>Other Screenings/Self Assessments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Registration Form</li><li>○ Health Screening Questionnaire</li><li>○ Functional Assessment</li><li>○ Gait Assessment</li></ul>
<b>Session 1:</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Welcome and Introduction</li> <li>○ Completion of Forms/Assessments</li> <li>○ Exercise Safety Discussion</li> <li>○ Exercise Routine Overview</li> <li>○ Warming Up Exercises</li> <li>○ Stretching Exercises</li> </ul>
<b>Session 2:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Exercise Basics</li> <li>○ Introduction to BASS</li> <li>○ Balance Basics</li> <li>○ How Much Exercise Is Enough?</li> </ul>
<b>Session 3:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Strength Training Basics Discussion</li> <li>○ Warm-up Exercises</li> <li>○ Strength Exercises</li> <li>○ Stretching Exercises</li> </ul>
<b>Session 4:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Exercise Intensity Discussion</li> <li>○ Warm-up Exercises</li> <li>○ Balance Exercises</li> <li>○ Strength Exercises</li> <li>○ Stretching Exercises</li> </ul>
<b>Session 5:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gait Discussion</li> <li>○ Gait Assessment</li> <li>○ Warm-up Exercises</li> <li>○ Strength Exercises</li> <li>○ Stretching Exercises</li> </ul>
<b>Session 6:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Walking Program Discussion</li> <li>○ Choosing Shoes Discussion</li> <li>○ Warm-up Exercises</li> <li>○ Balance Exercises</li> <li>○ Strength Exercises</li> <li>○ Stretching Exercises</li> </ul>
<b>Session 7:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Goal-setting Discussion</li> <li>○ Change Management Discussion</li> <li>○ Warm-up Exercises</li> <li>○ Strength Exercises</li> <li>○ Stretching Exercises</li> </ul>
<b>Session 8:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Next Steps Discussion</li> </ul>

- Warm-up Exercises
- Balance Exercises
- Strength Exercises
- Stretching Exercises
- Program Evaluation

- **Program Design and Elements**

The Healthy Steps in Motion Participant Guide has easy-to-read language and pictures. The exercises described in the guide are demonstrated and practiced in the workshops. Discussions and exercises help participants relate the information in the guide to their own lives.

Healthy Steps in Motion is designed to:

- Reduce the risk of falling
- Learn new exercises
- Learn the parts of an exercise routine
- Build strength, especially in the lower body
- Increase flexibility to improve movement
- Improve balance

- **Target Population**

Older adults ages 50 and up.

- **Length of the Program**

Healthy Steps in Motion is an 8-session program. It can be presented as a 4-week program with 2 one-hour workshops each week or as an 8-week program with a 1 one-hour workshop each week.

- **Recommended Class Size**

The size of a Healthy Steps in Motion class is dependent on the available space for participants to conduct all exercises as part of the workshops. These activities include, signing in, sitting in small groups or around tables, and a physical skills screening. The Physical skills screening station requires a 6' x 15' area next to a sturdy wall and, ideally, in a corner. Chairs should be arranged so that they can be easily moved to form pairs or small groups, or so participants can stand and do exercises. Consideration for space should include people who use walkers, wheelchairs and other aids.

- **Desired Outcomes**

The objectives of the Healthy Steps in Motion program are to:

- Create a comfortable, welcoming atmosphere
- Increase knowledge of the principles of exercise
- Increase knowledge of the benefits of exercise
- Increase knowledge of the aging process
- Understand how physical activity can benefit older adults
- Understand how to properly conduct the exercises
- Understand safety issues
- Increase and improve the physical activity of trainers and participants

- **Measures and Evaluation Activities, e.g., Fidelity Checks**

At the conclusion of the Healthy Steps in Motion workshop, participants complete a Workshop Evaluation Questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to provide the workshop leader and the Pennsylvania Department of Aging feedback on the educational and physical benefits that the participant received from attending the workshop. In addition, the Pennsylvania Department of Aging maintains a contract through the Pennsylvania Association for Area Agencies on Aging to conduct workshop leader fidelity monitoring.

### **Health Outcomes and Supporting Evidence**

The Healthy Steps in Motion falls prevention program underwent an evidence-based research study conducted through the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh under the direction of Steven M. Albert, PhD. Findings of this study were submitted to the National Council on Aging following the Administration for Community Living Aging and Disability Evidence-based Programs and Practices process. Healthy Steps in Motion received evidence-based status through the National Council on Aging in May 2018.

The major finding from the Healthy Steps in Motion evidence-based research study was the reduction in falls incidence associated with program participation. Older adults who completed the Healthy Steps in Motion program workshops had a significantly lower incidence of falls relative to a comparator group ascertained at the same sites who were otherwise similar in fall risk. In multivariate models, Healthy Steps in Motion reduced falls incidence by approximately 28%.

### **Program Costs**

Healthy Steps in Motion workshops are offered to older adults ages 50 and up at no charge through Pennsylvania's 52 Area Agencies on Aging. Other organizations and facilities outside of Pennsylvania's Area Agencies on Aging network can purchase a license to train Healthy Steps for Older Adults Certified Workshop Leaders to conduct Healthy Steps in Motion workshops. For information on the Healthy Steps in Motion program licensing and training costs or for additional information about the program please email [wellness@pa.gov](mailto:wellness@pa.gov).

### **Program Savings**

As published in *Preventative Medicine* VOL. 105, December 2017, Pages 5-9:

*"The benefits of HSIM and other group exercise programs are clear and will likely grow as a result of new efforts by the U.S. Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging to promote evidence-based community programs for falls prevention (Kulinski et al., 2017). The benefit of programs such as HSIM will likely also have greater effect as these are combined with new efforts to prevent additional falls among people who have fallen and are followed in primary care (Phelan et al., 2017) or after hospitalization (Matchar et al., 2017) as well as interventions targeting specific falls risk populations, such as people receiving podiatry (Cockayne et al., 2017) and vision care (Keay et al., 2017). Finally, combining exercise programs with environmental interventions will likely offer benefit, as research continues to show strong associations between falls risk and the physical and social environment (Nicklett et al., 2017)."*

*“...we conclude that large-scale statewide falls prevention programs, such as Pennsylvania's Healthy Steps in Motion (HSIM), are effective for falls prevention. HSIM was associated with lower falls incidence relative to a non-program comparison group.”*

## **Resource Requirements**

- **Facilities**

General site requirements

- Handicapped accessible
- Parking nearby
- Ideally, near public transportation or in an area where many older adults live
- Telephone
- Restrooms
- Good heating and ventilation, but keep on the cool side
- Air conditioning and/or fans for summer
- Room to move about for people who use walkers, wheelchairs, and other aids
- Space for exercising
  - Signing in
  - Sitting in small groups or around a table
  - Physical screening/exercise activities. (Each physical screening station requires a 6' x 15' area next to a sturdy wall and, ideally, in a corner.)

Floor surface

As long as you have enough spotters, any normal floor surface, without carpet or with flat-pile carpet, should be satisfactory.

- Avoid deep pile carpeting
- Remove area rugs, which can move, bunch, or curl and cause falls
- Make sure the floors are not slippery or recently waxed

- **Equipment and Materials**

Healthy Steps in Motion strength exercises are most effective when participants have access to an appropriate selection of resistance bands. Certified Workshop Leaders should have a range of resistance bands available, from extra light to heavy, for participants to use during each workshop session. Each participant should be offered the appropriate resistance band for their fitness level so that they are not exerting themselves more than they should.

Materials

- Registration Form
- Guides for participants
- Physical Skills Screening, Gait Assessment, Functional Assessment and other forms and hand-outs
- Resistance bands or tubes
- Name tags
- Extra pens and pencils
- Workshop Evaluation Forms
- Optional: music while participants conduct exercises, decorations, food, serving utensils, napkins, etc.

## Possible Locations for Classes

- Senior Centers
- Older adult living centers
- Recreation centers
- Hospitals
- YMCAs/YWCAs

## Training Requirements

- **Instructors/Leaders**
  - Healthy Steps in Motion Certified Workshop Leaders are required to take a two-day classroom training. The two-day workshop runs approximately 7 hours each day.
  - Healthy Steps in Motion Workshop Leader Program Manual
  - Healthy Steps in Motion Workshop Participant Guide
- **Instructor Certification Required? Yes**
- **Instructor qualifications**
  - Good communication and interpersonal skills
  - Enthusiasm, dependability
  - Interest in working with older adults
  - Ability to perform range of motion and low-level endurance exercises
- **Number of instructors required per class**
  - One or two based on class size plus spotters to assist participants

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