November is Fall Prevention Month

Building strength and balance with Evan van Dale, Chronic Disease Kinesiologist with the Selkirk & Area My Health Team

Evan Van Dale is not only new to the Interlake-Eastern RHA team, but his position is brand new to the Interlake-Eastern RHA as well! I sat down with Evan to ask him some questions about his role.

How would you describe the work that you do as a Chronic Disease Kinesiologist?

I mostly see patients on an individual basis. My role is to help individuals reach their goals related to chronic disease management through exercise, weight management, falls prevention and more.

What does a "typical" appointment look like?

We start by reviewing relevant medical history, any falls/injury history and, just as importantly, a discussion about their goals. From there, we start building a plan to help them achieve these goals through exercise, sleep routine improvement, stress management techniques, and time prioritization. After the initial appointment, we generally have a few follow-up appointments to review how things are going.

How does what you do help people reduce their risk of falls?

Strength training and balance training can *significantly* change a person's fall risk through increased strength, confidence and coordination.

What do you think are the most important things people can do to reduce their risk of falls?

Wear appropriate shoes that have good support and grip. If a shoe is worn daily, the shelf life is normally around 6 months. I find many clients have had the same pair for many years.

What are some key messages you'd like people to know? Strength training is for everyone. Balance exercises should be done daily. Always think of your goals, whether that's playing on the floor with kids/grandkids, or your retirement dreams and bucket lists. Sleep is not replaceable; if you struggle with your sleep, talk to your doctor or another professional.

How are people referred to see you?
People are typically referred through their primary care provider, who has to be a provider that is a part of the Selkirk & Area My Health Team.

For people not in your catchment area, how can they "see" you?
They can register for our Falls Prevention webinar on November 25th!
I'll cover balance exercises you can do safely at home, general activity guidelines and the overwhelming evidence as to why we should all lead more active lives. We will also go through a simple stretching routine. Wear comfortable clothing and good shoes!

To register for the 1-hour Falls Prevention Webinar with Evan and me, please email wellness@ierha.ca or call 1-877-979-WELL (9355).

We look forward to seeing you!

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