

# AVOID Frailty

## An Overview of Frailty and Strategies to Reduce Risk

### Take Home Messages

Frailty is a medical condition associated with reduced function and health in older adults. Frailty is more common as we age, but not an inevitable part of aging. Individuals living with frailty are more vulnerable to the effects of illness and more likely to have further decline in function and health.

#### Common Features of Frailty:

- Unintentional weight loss
- Muscle loss and weakness
- Fatigue
- Slow walking, slow gait speed
- Low levels of physical activity

#### When older adults are living with frailty:

- They are more likely to have many health problems that may reduce their ability to do activities necessary for daily living (e.g. walking, bathing, dressing, toileting etc.).
- Their body does not have the ability to cope with illnesses.
- Minor health changes may trigger rapid and dramatic deterioration.
- They may need more emergency room and hospitals services.
- They may need to move to a residential or long-term care facility.
- They may have a shorter life expectancy.

Frailty is a common, but not an inevitable part of aging! With intervention, frailty is potentially reversible if treated!

You can **AVOID** frailty by:

- Staying **Active**
- **Vaccinations**
- **Optimizing** your Medications
- Staying Socially **Interactive**
- Maintaining good **Diet** and Nutrition



## Tips for Taking Control

- Set realistic goals
- Build upon your existing preferences and local resources
- Integrate changes into normal activities
- Work with “buddies” and support network
- Make it fun
- Celebrate and recognize achievements
- Appreciate it takes time to create a “habit”

## Resources

- **What is Frailty?** - The Canadian Frailty Network shares current evidence about frailty, the risk factors, and common features of frailty.  
[www.cfn-nce.ca/frailty-matters/what-is-frailty/](http://www.cfn-nce.ca/frailty-matters/what-is-frailty/)
- **AVOID Frailty** - The Canadian Frailty Network provides information on what older adults can do to avoid frailty.  
[www.cfn-nce.ca/frailty-matters/avoid-frailty/](http://www.cfn-nce.ca/frailty-matters/avoid-frailty/)
- **AVOID Frailty Brochure** - The Canadian Frailty Network offers this summary about how you can AVOID Frailty and take control!  
[www.cfn-nce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/AvoidFrailtyBrochure-FINAL-web.pdf](http://www.cfn-nce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/AvoidFrailtyBrochure-FINAL-web.pdf)
- **eFit Toolkit for Individuals & Caregivers: Frailty** – The Centre for Studies in Aging and Health offers an educational lesson and related resources about frailty, risk factors, self-assessment, and how to avoid frailty.  
[sagelink.ca/health-care/ic-frailty/](http://sagelink.ca/health-care/ic-frailty/)  
[sagelink.ca/lessons/frailty/](http://sagelink.ca/lessons/frailty/)

