



Guidance for Resuming OSU Extension Physical Activity Programs during COVID-19: Better Bones and Balance, StrongWomen, Walk with Ease



Because Better Bones and Balance, StrongWomen, and Walk with Ease are designed to support older adults who are uniquely vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19, we set forth the following guidelines to promote safer practices when resuming group exercise programs:

REMOTE/VIRTUAL Classes:

- Remote or virtual classes are highly preferred. We will support leaders with training and accessing Zoom or other teaching technology if you wish to provide classes virtually.

OUTDOOR Classes:

- If hosted by Oregon State University or by OSU trained volunteers utilizing OSU Volunteer Insurance Coverage, programs may only be conducted by faculty/staff/volunteers who have completed the online COVID Awareness Training and reported their completion to their county faculty program manager.
- County faculty may elect to hold a group training via Zoom during which the volunteer training is shared to a group of leaders or volunteers.
- Access COVID training here: [Staying Safe in the Workplace COVID Training](#)
- Outdoor classes are limited to 10 participants (1 leader + 9 participants); if more people arrive or plan to participate, please plan to provide a second, adequately spaced/distanced cohort with another trained leader.
- Monitor air quality when conditions require and cancel classes if air quality levels reach “Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups” due to older adults being among the sensitive group classification. A site for monitoring air quality is found here: <https://oraqi.deq.state.or.us/home/map>

INDOOR Classes:

- Classes can be held in counties who have achieved PHASE 2 COVID Management.
- No more than 10 people to be in attendance at any given time, including the instructor(s).
- Maintain at least 6 feet of distance between participants; encourage more spacing if conditions permit. Plan for safe entering, exiting, and participation in the activity. If possible, keep doorways open to reduce touch points.
- Consider marking a grid on the floor creating 9’x9’ squares (allowing for a greater margin of safety given the higher respiration caused during physical activity). As people enter, have them fill in the furthest grid spaces first so that spaces fill in as people arrive and they don’t have to walk between spaces.
- Instructor(s) should consider a larger (12’x12’) grid space up front or in the circle to accommodate for voice projection and respiratory droplets produced as they provide instruction.



- Wear masks for the duration of the session. Please note that face shields are not a substitute for wearing a face mask. Participants may wear a face shield in addition to a face mask, but not as a stand-alone protection.
- Keep windows open to allow for the best circulation of fresh air into the space.
- If windows are unable to be opened due to building constraints or weather, most ventilation systems adequately remove particles with the addition of a HEPA or ESP filtering system. Check that your facility uses a filter when indoor air is recirculated.
- The use of portable fans are not recommended as they may spread infectious droplets beyond 6 feet. If there are no other cooling methods available, keep the fan more than 6 feet from any participants and keep the setting on low to minimize turbulence and reduce particle spread. Fans should not be used in a closed room where no doors or windows are able to be opened in order to allow for introduction of fresh air.
- Pay special attention to the use of restrooms. Please allow one person in the room at a time and wait a few minutes before next person enters.
- Participants should bring as few personal possessions into the fitness space as possible. Ask them to bring a bag in which they can contain belongings such as coats, towels, weights or water bottles. If chairs are used in programming, they can stow bags beneath their chairs. If chairs are not used, dedicate space that allows participants to keep their belongings separate from others'. Keep in mind the space where participants' personal belongings are kept during class must be cleaned post class.

BEFORE Class:

- Where possible, administer an online sign-up for volunteers and community members to ensure tracing capabilities. Online registration should include reminders about personal safety measures and protocols to utilize during class.
- Verify registrants with a physical sign in sheet like the [Oregon COVID-19 Contact Collaborative Sign in Sheet](#).
- The leader may elect to check people in or provide separate pencils/pens for each participant. Make a plan to let participants **keep** the pencil/pen or **sanitize** each pencil/pen after use. Consider a 'clean' container and 'used' container for writing utensils if sanitizing after class.
- The number of people is based on the space available with a minimum of **6 feet** of distance (35 square feet/person) between participants. The number of participants should be **capped at 10**. Physical distance needs to be clearly marked (floor signage, tape, chalk, hula hoops on the ground). If the program will host 10 people, a minimum of 350 square feet of space is needed. *Exceptions to the six foot rule will be granted ONLY to people who live together in the same household. E.g. a husband and wife or mother/daughter can sit, stand, or walk closer together.*
- Post signage about required protocol during class on registration table **or** make verbal announcements.
- Signage can be ordered from: [Oregon Health Authority Material Order Form](#) or you may request print outs from your Extension office.

DURING Class:

- Follow personal safety measures/protocols:
 - (1) hand washing/sanitizing upon arrival to class location,
 - (2) wear cloth face coverings or masks throughout the class, (face shields and single layer bandanas are not adequate for blocking exercise respiration and are therefore not allowable)
 - (3) keep six feet of physical distance between participants, and
 - (4) stay home when experiencing any symptoms of COVID, including sore throat, fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, congestion, runny nose, fatigue, shortness of breath, or loss of taste. (see communicable disease instructions)
- Announcements should be made once per week at a minimum reiterating safety measures. This may feel redundant but research shows we all need to hear or see messages multiple times before they 'stick'.
- If you collect money or donations during class, consider discontinuing the practice until after COVID, setting up an on-line payment system, or ensuring that participants can place their fee into a container with a slotted lid to avoid contacting other people's cash or checks. Exact change is recommended to ensure that making change is not necessary.
- Further safety measures for faculty, staff, volunteers and participants relevant to meeting communicable disease instructions
 - Wear masks anytime 6 feet of physical distance cannot be maintained, even when outdoors. Consider extending or expanding the physical distance between participants if speaking loudly, laughing, or singing.
 - Participants should be encouraged to bring their own but if they do not have one available, they may request a mask from the Extension office.
 - Consider whether a public address (PA) sound system for audibility may be needed.
 - Leaders/instructors should model all exercises with proper form to ensure safety.
 - Equipment:
 - Individuals are either responsible for providing their own equipment that is not shared OR equipment is sanitized with approved wipes for each new participant according to OHA protocols.
 - We do NOT recommend carpooling to class locations.

AFTER Class:

- Sanitize shared equipment with approved wipes or bleach solution, ensuring that hard surfaces remain wet with sanitizer for at least 10 seconds. Even if equipment will not be shared or touched between uses, industry guidance indicates sanitizing equipment is necessary.
- Remind participants to sanitize equipment they bring from home.
- Wash/sanitize hands a second time upon departure and encourage participants to repeat upon arrival back at home.

- Ask participants to contact leader if they experience COVID symptoms within a two week period of time following attendance at a class. The class leader should then report this information to her Extension faculty program manager who will report it to their Regional Administrator and county health department. Neither leaders nor patients will be publicly identified but it is important that the health department be able to conduct proper contact tracing for any potential exposures. The health department should be responsible for contacting other class members. Complete attendance listings that can be shared with the health department are most important for this reason.

To cover in Volunteer Training:

- [Staying Safe in the Workplace COVID Training](#)
- [OSU Face Covering Policy](#)
- [OSU Physical Distancing Policy](#)
- Industry-specific Guidance provided by the Oregon Health Authority that relates to my proposed programming activity and/or event
 - [Guidance for Fitness Related Organizations](#)
- Communicable Disease Plan
- [Contact Tracing Form](#)
- [Oregon Health Authority Material Order Form](#)

Edited 10.28.2020