

SilverSneakers® Fitness = Prevention

As a SilverSneakers class instructor working with older adults, you can expect an exciting and fulfilling experience. This population's wisdom, life experience, and genuine enthusiasm for maintaining an independent lifestyle will enhance your knowledge and personal growth.

Predictable Results

According to our 2015 Annual Participant Survey, of our active members ...

1. 84% enjoy moderate to vigorous aerobic activity at least 3x per week
2. 66% said they would exercise less or not at all if it weren't for SilverSneakers
3. 90% said they have a lot of energy most or some of the time
4. 73% have a friend in the program
5. 27% rated their emotional health "much or somewhat better" than a year ago

Changing Health Care Costs

A Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield analysis demonstrated that participation in the SilverSneakers Fitness Program reduced the rate of health care cost increases. The study included 2,382 Security Blue (Medicare Advantage) members participating in SilverSneakers. The study showed that while claims costs increased for members overall, **costs for SilverSneakers members were 30 percent lower than for non-participants**. In addition, costs for the most active members, who averaged four visits to a participating location per week, **decreased** during the first year of the program.

SilverSneakers Classes Improve Functional Fitness

In creating our functional fitness tests, Healthways looked to the work of Roberta Rikli and C. Jessie Jones at California State University, Fullerton. With an eye to group exercise instruction and risk reduction, the following tests offer the most reliable and valid test protocol in a comfortable, non-threatening environment. In total, 33 SilverSneakers enrollees with an average age of 70.3 years participated in both the baseline and follow-up functional fitness tests listed below:

- 6-Minute Walk – cardiovascular test to assess endurance
- Scratch Test – flexibility test that assesses shoulder range of movement
- Biceps Arm Curl – muscular strength and endurance test

(cont.)



SilverSneakers® Fitness = Prevention *(cont.)*

- Chair Stand – lower body muscular strength and endurance test
- Functional Reach – dynamic balance test
- 8-Foot Up & Go – agility and coordination test

After performing the baseline tests, SilverSneakers members were asked to continue to participate in SilverSneakers classes and return for follow-up evaluations twelve weeks later. Participants showed statistically significant improvement in all tests, consistent with the design of the class to increase muscular strength and endurance, range of movement, agility, balance, coordination, and skills necessary to perform activities of daily living.

Percent improvement:

- 6-Minute Walk – 8 percent
- Scratch Test – 52 percent
- Biceps Arm Curl – 16 percent
- Chair Stand – 11 percent
- Functional Reach – 10 percent
- 8-Foot Up & Go – 12 percent

