

Focus on your bone health



Osteoporosis is a condition more commonly found in women that causes bones to become weak, fragile and possibly break. Sometimes simply coughing, sneezing or bumping into a cabinet may cause a bone to break. Fractures most often happen in the hip, wrist or spine.

The effects of osteoporosis are usually experienced later in life, but there are steps young and old alike can take now to build and keep bones healthy and strong.

Osteoporosis is present in nearly 1 in 5 women age 50 or older, as compared to 1 in 20 men of the same age.

Healthy habits for all

As with many health conditions, there are certain habits everyone should adopt that are universally helpful, such as:

- Quitting smoking
- Limiting alcohol use
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Getting regular exercise

Healthy food choices are also important, as your bones need a variety of nutrients, including calcium and vitamin D. Calcium and vitamin D help decrease the bone loss and lower the risk for fractures.

Support your bone health now

Get enough calcium and vitamin D

According to health experts, females who still have periods and males of all ages should get no less than 1,000 mg of calcium daily. Females who no longer have periods should get at least 1,200 mg of calcium daily. However, adults shouldn't get more than 2,000 mg of calcium per day.

Additionally, it is recommended that adults get 600 to 800 IUs of vitamin D daily based on their age. Of course, high doses should be avoided, as with any substance it can be toxic. Always speak with a health care provider before starting supplements, as they can interact with your medicine or other medical conditions.*

Dairy products (e.g., milk, yogurt, hard cheeses) are well-known sources of calcium, and many are also fortified with vitamin D.

Non-dairy foods such as canned salmon, tuna and sardines, as well as egg yolks and almonds, are also good sources of calcium and vitamin D. Orange juice and some cereals also have vitamin D.

Fruits and vegetables are a great way to get important vitamins and minerals. You'll get calcium from kale, broccoli and other dark leafy green vegetables.

Calcium supplements are available for those who have a hard time getting enough calcium from what they eat. Talk with your doctor about calcium supplements before you start.

Your skin makes vitamin D in response to sun exposure, and your body needs vitamin D to absorb calcium and build healthy bones.

Depending on where you live and your skin pigmentation, your body may produce some vitamin D. If you live in a northern climate, have darker skin, use sunscreen or don't spend much time outdoors, you may need to eat more foods containing vitamin D or add a vitamin D supplement to get the recommended daily intake.

Talk with your doctor before taking vitamin D supplements.

Be active every day

A regular routine of weight-bearing activity, such as walking, running, climbing stairs or even dancing, helps to build and maintain strong bones. Combine your weight-bearing activity with strength training for the muscles in your upper body and spine. In addition, consider adding balance exercises to help reduce your risk for falling. This is especially important for older adults.



Talk to your doctor about your risks for osteoporosis

*Talk with your doctor before using any supplement. That includes vitamins, minerals, dietary supplements, and herbal products. Some can be toxic at high doses. Or they may interfere with certain medications or not be advised for you.