



Nutrition & Health

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Take action for better bone health!

Did you know that one in two women and one in four men over age 50 will have an osteoporosis related fracture. In fact, a woman's hip fracture risk equals her combined risk of breast, uterine and ovarian cancer. Hip fractures account for 300,000 hospitalizations annually and, unfortunately, one in five people with a hip fracture end up in a nursing home within a year.

Osteoporosis is often called the silent disease because bone loss occurs without any symptoms. The first sign may be a fracture. The most common sites for fractures are the wrist, hip or spine.

Bones are living organisms. Calcium is deposited and withdrawn from bones daily. We can increase bone density up to about age 30, but then we begin to slowly lose bone mass. Women lose bone mass faster after menopause. Bones can also weaken early in life without a healthy diet and the right kind of physical activity.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends five simple steps to bone health and osteoporosis prevention:

1. Get daily recommended amounts of calcium and vitamin D.
 - MyPyramid recommendations are that all adults get three cups of non-fat or one percent milk or its equivalent daily. One cup of yogurt, one and one-half ounces of natural cheese (one-third cup shredded) or two ounces of processed cheese are equivalent to one cup of milk.
 - The amount of vitamin D we need daily increases with age. We need 200 iu up to age 50, 400 iu from age 51 to 70 and 600 iu over age 70. Our main food sources of vitamin D are fortified milk with 100 iu in each cup, some fortified cereals (read the label), cold saltwater fish like salmon, halibut, herring, tuna and Calcium and/or vitamin-mineral supplements. We also get some vitamin D from exposure of our skin to sun, but the amount varies depending on time of the year and whether

we are protected by sunscreen. Never get more than 2,000 iu of vitamin D daily from a combination of all sources as higher amounts are toxic.

2. Engage in regular weight-bearing exercise.
 - Simple activities like taking a walk, climbing stairs or dancing help to build and maintain bone strength.
3. Avoid smoking and excess alcohol intake.
 - Excess intake is more than one drink daily for women and more than two drinks daily for men.
4. Talk to your doctor about your bone health.
 - Discuss your family history and risk for osteoporosis.
5. Have a bone density test and take medication when appropriate.
 - Bone density tests are painless and usually covered by your insurance.

To get more calcium daily:

- Make oatmeal and cream-type soups with milk instead of water.
- Mix one-half cup plain yogurt with your favorite 100% juice as a breakfast or snack drink.
- Make instant hot cocoa with milk, not water.
- Use fruit flavored yogurt as a fruit salad dressing.
- Layer low-fat sugar-free vanilla yogurt with canned or frozen fruit and top with nuts or Grape-nut cereal for wonderful sundaes.
- Top baked potatoes with plain yogurt and chives or salsa.
- Make gelatin salad with one and one-fourth cups water and three-fourths cup plain yogurt.

Lactose intolerant?

Many people can use small amounts of dairy foods with other foods for meals and snacks. Most people tolerate yogurt with active cultures and natural cheeses – or you can take the enzyme lactase (in pills or drops) before consuming milk products.