FIVE STEPS TO BETTER BONE HEALTH

Building strong bones throughout your lifetime will enable you to continue doing the things you enjoy for longer. It will also help you live independently, free of the pain and suffering caused by broken bones.

There are many actions that you can take to prevent and control osteoporosis. Take charge of your bone health today.

www.osteoporosis.org.au
Regular exercise

Regular weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercises are beneficial at all ages and important for maintaining strong bones and muscles.

**Moderate impact weight-bearing**
- jogging
- hiking
- brisk walking
- stair climbing

**High impact weight bearing**
- 50–100 jumps or rope skipping
- related impact loading sports: e.g. racquet sports

These should be performed for at least 30 minutes, 3–5 days per week.
Muscle-strengthening or resistance exercises at least 2 days per week.

For maximum benefits the programme should be high intensity and become progressively more challenging over time. Don’t forget to target the major muscles around the hip and spine.

**Weight lifting**

- Using elastic exercise bands
- Using weight machines
- Lifting your own body weight
- Standing and rising on your toes

As you age you need to ensure that the exercise is appropriate to your level of fitness. If you have osteoporosis or spinal fractures you need to be cautious when doing activities that could lead to injury and you should have professional guidance when setting up a regular fitness routine.
Bone-healthy nutrients

Don’t let this ‘silent’ disease eat up your bones.
Sufficient calcium, vitamin D and protein are essential for your bone and muscle health. Dairy foods such as milk, yoghurt, and cheese, have the highest amounts of calcium and also contain protein and other minerals that are good for bones. Calcium is also contained in certain fruits and green vegetables (e.g. kale, broccoli, apricots) and in canned fish with bones (sardines). If available, take advantage of foods fortified with calcium. While dietary calcium is best, some people may need to take supplements if they can’t achieve their daily calcium goals from food alone. Calcium supplements should however be limited to 500–600 mg per day and it is generally recommended that they be taken combined with vitamin D.

Calcium requirements in males

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Calcium Requirement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19-70 years</td>
<td>1000 mg/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70+ years</td>
<td>1300 mg/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-18 years</td>
<td>1300 mg/day</td>
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Vitamin D

Most of the vitamin D in the body is produced from exposure of the skin to sunlight. However, depending on where you live, you may not be able to get enough vitamin D from safe exposure to sunlight alone. Small amounts of vitamin D are found in foods (e.g. egg yolk, salmon and tuna). Some vitamin D fortified foods are available. If vitamin D levels are low a supplement may be required, talk to your doctor.
Stop smoking: it has been shown to raise fracture risk substantially.

Reduce alcohol intake: while a daily glass or two of wine or beer won’t impact on your bone health, more than two standard drinks can raise your fracture risk substantially.

Maintain a healthy weight: if you are underweight you are at increased risk of fracture.
4 Identify your risk factors

Talk to your doctor. Be aware of any risk factors that can make you a candidate for osteoporosis and fractures. There are many different factors that can place you at risk.

Statistics from the UK, USA and Australia show that men are between 20-25% less likely than women to visit a doctor. Don’t avoid your check up. Talk to your doctor about bone health and ask whether you should have a Bone Density Test.

“Women have a much healthier relationship with their bodies. They see it as a question of maintenance, whereas men see it as a question of repair. Men treat their bodies a bit like a car: once it’s burnt out they’ll fix it, but until then they power on.”

Men's Health Magazine
Take osteoporosis medicine if prescribed

There are many proven treatments that can help improve bone density and reduce your risk of fractures.

Make sure you comply with your prescribed treatment regimen and if you’re concerned about any side effects, speak to your doctor.

**Because the benefits of treatment are not always evident, many patients stop taking their medication – don’t let that happen to you.** By continuing on treatment you can protect your bones and avoid damaging and potentially life-threatening fractures.
#LoveYourBones

World Osteoporosis Day
October 20

For further information about osteoporosis visit www.osteoporosis.org.au