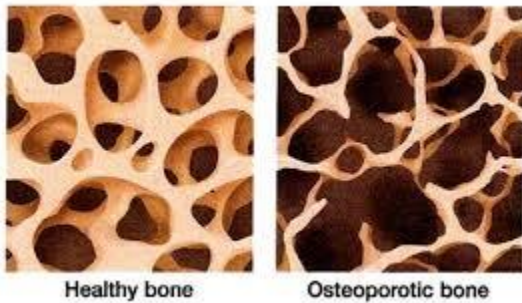


Osteoporosis

What is it?

Osteoporosis is the weakening of bones. This weakening causes bones to break more easily. In severe cases, something as little as a sneeze could break a bone.

You can see in the picture below how the inside of your bone loses mass and becomes weak.



What causes it?

Factors that may cause osteoporosis are aging, family history, certain diseases, poor diet, and poor exercise. Also, women are more likely to get osteoporosis. 80% of people with osteoporosis are **women**. If you are a woman, the chance of breaking a hip from osteoporosis is equal to your combined risk of getting breast, ovarian, and uterine cancer.

Prevention

We cannot control our age, family history, or diseases we were born with, but we can take steps with our **nutrition and physical activity** to prevent osteoporosis.

Nutrition

The types of food we eat are so important in keeping our bones strong! Eating **calcium and vitamin D** are the two major steps you can take to build strong bones.

Calcium can be found in dairy products like milk, cheese, and yogurt, but there are non-dairy sources of calcium, too. The chart to the side shows some foods and how many milligrams (mg) of calcium are in them.

| Amount of Calcium (mg) in Non-Dairy Foods | |
|---|-----|
| Broccoli (1 stalk, boiled) | 112 |
| Broccoli (one cup, raw, chopped) | 43 |
| Collards (1 cup, boiled) | 265 |
| Kale (1 cup, raw, chopped) | 90 |
| Okra (raw, 1 cup) | 81 |
| Green Peas (1 cup, raw) | 36 |
| Green Peas (1 cup, canned) | 34 |
| Baked Potato (medium, with skin) | 26 |
| Baked Sweet Potato (medium, with skin) | 89 |
| Red Tomatoes (canned, 1 cup) | 74 |
| Turnip Greens (raw, 1 cup) | 105 |

Vitamin D is found in eggs, fish, liver, and some milk has vitamin D added to it. You can also get vitamin D from the sun, but it is not recommended to spend more than 10 minutes in the sun without sunscreen. If you have trouble getting calcium and vitamin D through food, try taking supplements.

Recommendations for Daily Amount of Calcium and Vitamin D

- If you are between the ages of 19 and 49, you should eat 1000 mg of calcium a day.
- If you are 50 and older, you should be getting 1200 mg of calcium a day.
- Vitamin D—19-49 years old 400-800 IU a day
- Vitamin D—50 and older 800-1000 IU a day

Physical Activity



Weight bearing activity is the best for keeping bones strong.

Dancing, walking, hiking, and any time you are in a standing position are weight bearing exercises. Even walking on the treadmill or the elliptical machine are considered weight bearing.

You could also do **strengthening exercises** to make bones strong.

You could do body weight exercises like push-ups and squats or you could use weights, elastic bands, and weight machines. All of these will help strengthen your bones and improve balance which prevents broken bones from falls.

What to Do if You Have Osteoporosis

- To find out if you have osteoporosis, ask your doctor about getting a bone mineral density test especially if you have any of the risk factors (age of 65 or older or has reached menopause, family history, diseases, poor diet and exercise).
- Osteoporosis is not reversible, but it can be treated by medications. Talk to your doctor about what will work best for you.
- Also, talk to your doctor about medications that you are taking for other health problems because there are some that may cause your bones to lose density and become weak.

- If you have osteoporosis, try to prevent any further weakening by adding calcium and vitamin D to your diet and doing weight bearing or strengthening exercise.