

Compatible News

August: Bone Health

Bones play many roles in the body — providing structure, protecting organs, anchoring muscles and storing calcium. While it's particularly important to take steps to build strong and healthy bones during childhood and adolescence, you can take steps during adulthood to protect bone health. Your bones are continuously changing; a new bone is made and old bone is broken down. When you're young, your body makes new bones faster than it breaks down old bones, and your bone mass increases. Most people reach their peak bone mass around age 30. After that, bone remodeling continues, but you lose slightly more bone mass than you gain.

A number of factors can affect bone health. For example:

The amount of calcium in your diet. A diet low in calcium contributes to diminished bone density, early bone loss and an increased risk of fractures.

Physical activity. People who are physically inactive have a higher risk of osteoporosis than do their more-active counterparts.

Tobacco and alcohol use. Research suggests that tobacco use contributes to weak bones. Similarly, regularly having more than two alcoholic drinks a day increases the risk of osteoporosis, possibly because alcohol can interfere with the body's ability to absorb calcium.



Hormone levels. Too much thyroid hormone can cause bone loss. In women, bone loss increases dramatically at menopause, due to decreasing estrogen levels. Prolonged periods and absence of menstruation (amenorrhea), before menopause also increases the risk of osteoporosis. In men, low testosterone levels can cause a loss of bone mass.

Eating disorders and other conditions. People who have anorexia or bulimia are at risk of bone loss. In addition, stomach surgery (gastrectomy), weight-loss surgery and conditions such as Crohn's disease, celiac disease and Cushing's disease can affect your body's ability to absorb calcium.

Certain medications. Long-term use of corticosteroid medications, such as prednisone, cortisone, prednisolone and dexamethasone, are damaging to bones. Other drugs that may increase the risk of osteoporosis include aromatase inhibitors to treat breast cancer, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, methotrexate, some anti-seizure medications, and proton pump inhibitors.

For more information:

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/bone-health/art->

You can take a few simple steps to prevent or slow bone loss. For example:

Include plenty of calcium in your diet. For adults ages 19 to 50 and men ages 51 to 70, the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) is 1,000 milligrams (mg) of calcium a day. The recommendation increases to 1,200 mg a day for women after age 50 and for men after age 70. Good sources of calcium include dairy products, almonds, broccoli, kale, canned salmon with bones, sardines and soy products, such as tofu. If you find it difficult to get enough calcium from your diet, ask your doctor about supplements.

Pay attention to vitamin D. Your body needs vitamin D to absorb calcium. For adults ages 19 to 70, the RDA of vitamin D is 600 international units (IUs) a day. The recommendation increases to 800 IUs a day for adults age 71 and older. Good sources of vitamin D include oily fish, such as tuna and sardines, egg yolks and fortified milk. Sunlight also contributes to the body's production of vitamin D. If you're worried about getting enough vitamin D, ask your doctor about supplements.

Include physical activity in your daily routine. Weight-bearing exercises, such as walking, jogging, tennis and climbing stairs, can help you build strong bones and slow bone loss.

Avoid substance abuse. Don't smoke and avoid drinking more than two alcoholic drinks a day.



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Compatible Home Care Agency also holds an Alzheimer's support group in the main office once a month and also holds educational seminars on various diseases and conditions for community members. Please feel free to contact our office for further information.