

Keeping our bones healthy is a lifelong process. As we get older, our bodies may break down bone faster than we can make new bone. This can cause problems if our bones don't have enough stored nutrients to keep them strong. Eating nutrient-rich foods and getting weight-bearing physical activity help keep our bones in good shape no matter what our age.



Test Your Knowledge

Circle the habits and nutrients that are good for bone health.

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|-----------|-----------|
| Vitamin K | Smoking |
| Walking | Swimming |
| Caffeine | Calcium |
| Dancing | Magnesium |

Answers on back



Keep Moving

Staying active is important for bone health. Whenever your heel hits the ground, it helps increase bone density and decrease osteoporosis. Try these weight-bearing, bone-friendly activities:

- Walking or jogging
- Dancing
- Weightlifting

Fact

Research shows that weight-bearing exercise, such as walking, for a total of 30 minutes each day may not only stop bone loss but also can increase bone density.



For more information on this and other topics, see www.ag.ndsu.edu

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Nourish Your Bones



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Answers: Vitamin K, Walking, Dancing, Calcium, Magnesium



Get Your Calcium

Calcium provides strength to bone framework. Individuals between ages 19 and 50 need 1,000 milligrams (mg) of calcium each day, while those over the age of 50 need at least 1,200 mg each day.

Drinking milk instead of sodas or other sweetened beverages is a good step toward better bone health.

Good Sources of Calcium

- Milk: 300 milligrams (mg)/8 ounces
- Nonfat yogurt: 415 mg/8 ounces
- Large taco with cheese: 340 mg
- Sardines: 324 mg/3 ounces
- Fortified orange juice: 300 mg/8 ounces
- Swiss cheese: 270 mg/1 ounce
- Vanilla ice cream: 170 mg/8 ounces
- Collard greens: 100 mg/½ cup
- Spinach: 59 mg/2 cups
- Broccoli: 50 mg/½ cup



Did You Know?

Fat-free (skim) milk has slightly more calcium than whole or 2 percent milk. Whole milk usually has about 291 mg of calcium per serving, while fat-free milk provides 302 mg per serving.

Don't Forget the Sunshine Vitamin

Vitamin D is essential to bone health. Without it, bones may become thin or brittle. Although our bodies make vitamin D naturally from exposure to sunlight, people who live in the northern part of the country do not have adequate exposure to sunlight to make enough vitamin D. Deficiency is becoming more and more common. Nutrition experts recommend 1,000 (or more) International Units (IU) of vitamin D each day through fortified foods and/or supplements.

Good sources of vitamin D

- Salmon: 794 IU/3 ounces
- Tuna: 154 IU/3 ounces
- Milk: 115 IU/8 ounces



Eat Plenty of Greens

Leafy greens are a good source of calcium, vitamin K and many other nutrients that are important for bone health.



Good examples include parsley, Swiss chard, kale, broccoli and spinach. Aim to eat at least three servings (2 to 3 cups) of vegetables each day.

Note: If you are on Coumadin or another blood-thinning medication, remember that maintaining a consistent intake of leafy greens is important. Check with your health-care provider before making dietary changes to include more leafy greens.

Limit Alcohol Intake

Keep alcoholic drinks to a minimum. Women should have a maximum of one drink per day, while men should stick to two drinks per day or fewer. Drinking too much alcohol may decrease bone density and put you more at risk for bone disease.

Reduce or Eliminate Smoking

Smoking also may increase bone loss, along with all of the other negative impacts it has on the heart and lungs. Quitting smoking reduces the risk and prevents further damage.

Consider Other Bone-healthy Nutrients



Magnesium: found in halibut, almonds, spinach and beans

Boron: found in dates, raisins, prunes, almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts and apples

Zinc: found in oysters, beef, pork, baked beans and yogurt

Consider Supplements

Sometimes we may not get all the nutrition we need from our diet alone. Supplements can help bridge the gap to ensure we are getting the nutrients our bones need. Depending on our food choices, we may need supplements of calcium, vitamin D and magnesium to ensure bone health. Talk with your health-care provider before adding a supplement to your diet, and always inform your health-care provider of any supplements you take.

