

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a disease that consists of weakened bones and increased fracture risk. It's sometimes called a "silent disease" with few, if any, noticeable changes to your health to indicate you have it. In fact, the first indication of osteoporosis often is when a bone breaks.

Although it can strike at any age, osteoporosis mostly occurs in people over age 50. According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, half of women and one in four men over the age of 50 will break a bone due to osteoporosis.



Taking steps to build bone health while you are young can literally make or break what will happen to your bones as you age. However, at every age, a healthful diet and regular weight-bearing exercise are important, helping to

ensure bone tissue continues to build.

Bone Health and Diet

Bones may seem dry and dull, but they are far from it. They are constantly under construction; certain cells break down bone tissue and other cells use the calcium and nutrients from foods you eat to build new bone. If you are not physically active or getting the nutrition you need, bones will suffer—becoming less dense, weaker and more likely to fracture.



Dietitian's Tip: Choose SKIM Milk

Full-fat dairy products contain saturated fat, a type of fat linked to cardiovascular disease. That is why skim milk, also known as nonfat milk, is a smart choice because it is low in fat. Skim milk provides a source of protein and calcium, which are important for muscle and bone strength. During the skimming process of skim milk, vitamins A and D are removed as the fat is removed. To compensate, milk manufacturers fortify the milk with these vitamins. Choosing skim milk fortified with vitamins A and D allows you to get the necessary vitamins that milk has to offer without the saturated fat. It's a win, win!

Bone-Building Nutrient: Calcium

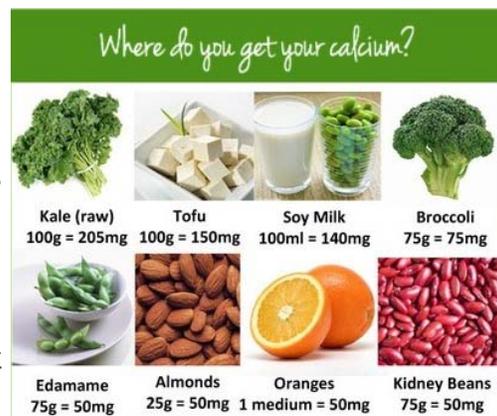
Calcium, the major nutrient needed to form new bone cells, is vital for bone health. Bones store more than 99% of the calcium in your body. Some calcium-rich foods include milk, yogurt and cheese, and calcium-fortified soy milk and fruit juice. Other good sources include soybeans, dark green leafy vegetables and calcium-fortified tofu. It's important to understand how much calcium you should consume daily:

- Adults ages 19-50 need at least 1,000 milligrams of calcium a day.
- Women over age 50 and men over age 70 need at least 1,200 milligrams of calcium a day.

Calcium cannot build bones alone. It works with other nutrients including vitamin D, vitamin K, potassium, and magnesium to increase bone density and strength.

Foods vs. Supplements

Supplements can't duplicate what foods offer naturally. If you are not able or prefer not to drink milk, make sure you're eating plenty of non-dairy calcium-rich and calcium-fortified foods and beverages. Consult with your doctor about taking a calcium supplement with vitamin D, especially if you are a woman in menopause or post-menopause.



Welcome Fall Foods!

Summer's bounty of tomatoes and peaches may be over, but harvest season has its own advantages such as an abundance of the following delicious fall foods.

Pumpkin

Is anything more fall-like than a pumpkin? These famously orange winter squashes are chock-full of vitamin A and deliver 3 grams of fiber per ½-cup serving of cooked sugar pumpkin, plus potassium.

And don't forget about roasting the seeds! Pumpkin seeds are a delicious and healthful snack and a good source of several nutrients, including zinc, which is essential for many body processes including immune function.



Oats

Heart-healthy oats are loaded with fiber for slow-burning energy. The soluble fiber in oats also boosts

heart health. Warm oatmeal is an affordable and filling breakfast. Top oatmeal with nuts such as walnuts or pecans, seeds such as ground flaxseed or chia seed and fruit such as pears or cranberries for even more fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

Apples

Apples pack a powerful nutrition punch. They are a good source of vitamin C and fiber. Sprinkle apple slices with ground cinnamon or pair with cheese or peanut butter for an easy snack. Don't forget about dinner! Apples also taste great when stewed and served with savory foods such as roasted pork.



Brussels Sprouts

They may be small, but brussels sprouts are part of the powerhouse cruciferous veggie family. Each 1-cup serving of cooked Brussels sprouts provides 4 grams of fiber, is an excellent source of vitamins A, C, K and folate and a good source of iron.



They even have some protein!

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Benefits of Coffee

Wake up and smell the ... antioxidants?

If you think your morning cup of joe provides nothing more to your body than a jolt of caffeine, you might be pleasantly surprised to learn that your daily cup may provide some additional benefits as well. Drinking moderate amounts of coffee has been linked to lower risk of cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, and Parkinson's disease.

And those antioxidants? Although researchers have yet to determine the exact mechanisms behind some of the disease-preventing effects, it is important to keep in mind that these compounds may be exerting other beneficial effects, such as acting as an anti-inflammatory. Coffee also contains small amounts of some nutrients, including potassium, niacin, and magnesium.

Making your coffee a vehicle for fat-free or low-fat milk is one way to increase your daily calcium and vitamin D intake. If your diet does not include dairy, a fortified soy beverage is a calcium-rich alternative. Just be mindful if adding sweetener, since coffee drinks can be a source of added sugars.

So how much java is too much? Three to five 8-ounce cups of coffee provide about 400 milligrams of caffeine, which is the most that is recommended per day for healthy adults. Certain groups, such as people with hypertension and the elderly, may be at a higher risk for negative side effects of caffeine and so should consider limiting their intake. Due to coffee being a stimulant, it is not recommended for children and adolescents.



Nutrition News

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