



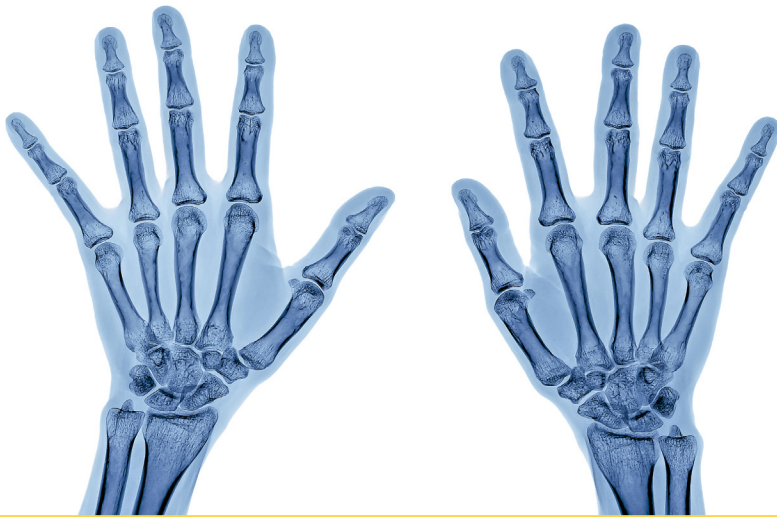
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S

FRESH CONVERSATIONS

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A Healthy Living Newsletter for Seniors

Are Healthy Bones Important?



One in two women and one in four men over the age of 50 will break a bone because of osteoporosis.

Bone is living, growing tissue. Maintaining healthy bone is a balancing act. Our bodies continually remove older bone and replace it with new. As adults, if we lose bone at too-fast-a-rate, replace it at too-slow-a-rate, or both, the result is osteoporosis—weak, porous bones that fracture easily.

Fractured bones from this condition can be life-altering, and even life-threatening, but they are not inevitable. There are things you can do to maintain your bones. And the earlier you start the better.

Risk Factors You Can't Change

Bone mass peaks between ages 18 and 25. This peak mass is determined largely by genetics, but nutrition, physical activity and health status during growth play a role as well.

As we age, hormonal changes (particularly menopause), health problems such as thyroid imbalances and digestive disorders and long-term use of certain medications (including steroids and some heartburn drugs) all play a role in creating the imbalance that leads to weaker bones.

Risk Factors You Can Change

Smoking is associated with lower bone density, as is alcohol abuse. Nutritionally, high salt intake, low calcium intake and insufficient vitamin D are all associated with higher risk for bone loss, and emerging research suggests other roles for diet as well.

Researchers at the Bone Metabolism Laboratory at Tufts' Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging study how food affects the acid-base balance in the body and how it impacts bone health. Sound complicated? It is.

But you don't need to understand the details of the science to embrace the advice from the study's lead scientist: "If people adhere to the standard dietary guidelines, they will get the appropriate balance of acid and base, along with plenty of calcium and vitamin D. Our research indicates that the diet that is good for your bones is the same diet that is good for overall health." ***Now, where have you heard that before?***

Adapted from "[How Diet Impacts Bone Health](#)." Health and Nutrition Letter. Retrieved May 2019.

Pay Attention to Calcium and Vitamin D

Bones are the main storage site for calcium, which is necessary for many important bodily functions. If you don't get the calcium you need from diet, the body will take calcium from the bones. You need vitamin D to help your body absorb calcium.

Here are general recommendations for daily intakes of calcium and vitamin D. Ask your pharmacist, dietitian or healthcare provider for individual advice.

	Men age 50-70	Men 71 and older	Women 50 and older
Calcium*	1,000 mg	1,200 mg	1,200 mg
Vitamin D**	800 to 1,000 IU	800 to 1,000 IU	800 to 1,000 IU
<i>*National Academies of Sciences</i> <i>**National Osteoporosis Foundation</i> <i>mg = milligrams IU = International Units</i>			

Americans get most of their calcium from dairy products such as milk, yogurt and cheese. Calcium is also found naturally in dark green, leafy vegetables, such as broccoli, collard greens, bok choy and spinach; sardines and salmon with bones; tofu; almonds; and foods fortified with calcium, such as orange juice, cereals and breads. Check the Nutrition Facts Label to be sure you meet your daily goal.

Vitamin D is created in the skin when exposed to the sun's rays. Just a few foods naturally have vitamin D, such as saltwater fish, egg yolk and liver; therefore, foods are fortified with vitamin D to make it more available. These include milk, yogurt, orange juice and cereals.

What about supplements? Before starting calcium or vitamin D supplements, discuss potential benefits and risks with your healthcare provider.



Think you get all the calcium you need at breakfast with a splash of milk on your cereal? Think again. One cup of milk provides 300 mg of calcium and 100 IU of vitamin D. Where will you get the rest?

Know Your Risk!

Osteoporosis can lead to weaker bones and an increased risk of fractures of the hip, spine and wrist. Each year, over 300,000 older people—those 65 and older—are hospitalized for hip fractures.

- If you are over 50 and break a bone, ask your doctor about a bone density test.
- If you haven't had a bone density exam by age 65, you need one. You're entitled to a bone density test as part of the "Welcome to Medicare" package.
- Tell your younger family members if you or others in your family have osteoporosis.



If you have low bone density or osteoporosis, work with a professional on any activity that will add load to your bones. You want to use proper form and body mechanics to protect your spine.

Keep Moving!

Inactivity leads to bone loss. And recent studies suggest that weight-bearing exercise, like walking, may reduce bone loss.

When we stand, gravity applies a "load" to our bones equal to our body weight. Brisk walking increases the load, and jogging adds even more.

Weight slightly compresses the bone matrix and triggers the cells to take in more calcium and other minerals. This ultimately increases bone density.

Resistance exercises are beneficial to muscle, so you have the strength to jump and land or engage in higher impact activity safely.

Source: "[Osteogenic Loading](#)." American Bone Health. Retrieved May 2019.



Testimonial

Dorothy attends Encore Café at Lowe Park in Cedar Rapids.

Dorothy Kruckman loves getting out and about with her friends and spending time with her grandchildren.

On the third Thursday of the month, she and her friends make it a day at Lowe Park. They start with Witwer Healthy Aging Bingo in the morning, grab a tasty lunch at the Encore Café and finish the day with *Fresh Conversations*.

Dorothy always learns something new at *Fresh Conversations* meetings. "I have changed the way I eat. I read food labels before I purchase items at the store and pay close attention to what I eat."

Exercise is also very important. Dorothy added the seated exercises demonstrated at *Fresh Conversations* into her daily routine, which includes a lot of walking, thanks to her dog.

Dorothy, you're a great example of staying healthy and active to enjoy time with friends and family!

Word Jumble Answers (page 4)
1. Bone Density
2. Calcium
3. Bone Loss
4. Osteoporosis
5. Activity
6. Vitamin D

Children Need Nutritious Meals and Snacks When School's Out



Photo courtesy of the Iowa Department of Education, 2019.

Spread the word to family and neighbors! The Summer Food Service Program returns to Iowa this summer to provide thousands of free meals to children.

Summer meals help to ensure kids have access to healthy food when school meals aren't available.

Meal sites will operate across the state from June through August. All children 18 and under are welcome to eat **free of charge, with no sign-up required.**

Many summer meal sites offer fun activities so kids and teens can eat a healthy meal, be active and spend time with friends. Meals, days and times vary by location, so check your local site for availability.

A nutritious summer starts here! Find a meal near you:

- Text "Food" to 877-877
- Call 2-1-1 or 1-866-3-HUNGRY
- Visit www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks

Word Jumble

1. NOEB ENITDYS

2. MICUACL

3. OBEN SLOS

4. POROSOSTEIOS

5. TAVIYICT

6. MIVAIN T D

Don't Fall for It



Falls are a common cause of injury for seniors. More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling, usually by falling sideways.

To help prevent falls, talk to your doctor about your risk. Do strength and balance exercises. Have your vision checked, and take steps to make your home safer.

Source: "[Take Steps Now for Healthy Aging.](#)" Healthy You: Quick Facts. Retrieved May 2019.

Take Action Corner

This month I will...



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