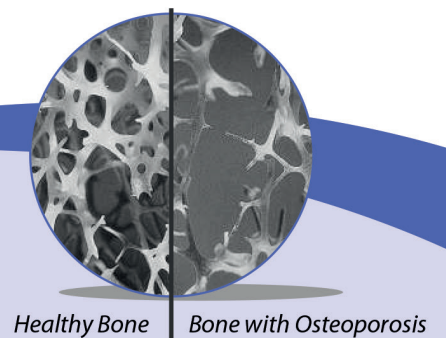


Your Guide to Strong Bones



Osteoporosis is a disease that makes bones break easily with a minor event such as lifting, twisting, tripping, slipping, stumbling or falling. Most osteoporotic fractures occur in the hip, spine, shoulder or wrist.

Broken bones can be painful. Even after they heal you may not be strong. A broken hip is especially serious for older people, often leaving them disabled.



Good Nutrition Is Important For Strong Bones

- Eat a balanced diet from all four food groups (carbohydrates, protein, dairy, fruits and vegetables) to help keep bones strong and prevent fractures.
- Vitamin D is very important for bone health. It helps build stronger bones, partly by increasing the absorption of calcium. Vitamin D also improves the function of muscles, which in turn improves your balance and decreases the likelihood of falling.
- Calcium is important for bone health. It is best to get your calcium from food sources, such as milk, cheese, yogurt, calcium-fortified soy/almond/rice beverage and calcium-fortified drinks.
- Do not take a Calcium or Vitamin D supplement without checking with your Doctor first.
- Limit the amount of alcohol in your diet to two or fewer drinks per day.
- Stop smoking.

The recommended allowances, as defined by the Institute of Medicine, are outlined in the table below:

Table 1. Calcium and Vitamin D dietary reference intakes by life stage¹

	Calcium	Vitamin D
Life-stage group (Age & Gender)	RDA (mg/d) (intake that covers needs of ≥ 97.5% of population)	RDA (IU/d) (intake that covers needs of ≥ 97.5% of population)
31-50 yr (m & f)	1000 mg	600 IU
51-70 yr (m)	1000 mg	600 IU
51-70 yr (f)	1200 mg	600 IU
71 + yr (m & f)	1200 mg	800 IU



Calcium Content of Some Common Foods

Food Source	Portion	Calcium
Milk - 2%, 1%, skim, chocolate	1 cup / 250 mL	300 mg
Calcium enriched milk	1 cup / 250 mL	400 mg
Cheese - Cheddar, Edam, Gouda	1 ¼" / 3 cm cube	245 mg
Yogurt - plain	¾ cup / 185 mL	295 mg
Salmon, with bones, canned	½ can / 105 g	240 mg
Fortified orange juice	1 cup / 250 mL	300 mg
Soybeans - cooked	1 cup / 250 mL	170 mg
Instant oatmeal - calcium enriched	1 pouch / 32 g	150 mg
Figs – dried	10	150 mg

Exercise to Keep Your Bones and Muscles Strong

Strong muscles help to maintain strong bones. Perform exercises to increase muscle strength using resistance bands or weights at least 3 times per week, and target all major muscle groups.

- Falls can lead to broken bones. Improve your balance and coordination with daily balance exercises.
- Perform aerobic exercise for at least 30 minutes per day. To maintain bone strength, exercises where your bones have to carry your weight (e.g., brisk walking, dancing) are better than exercises where your weight is supported (e.g., swimming, biking).
- Do exercises to maintain or improve posture daily, such as spinal extension exercises.
- Older adults with osteoporosis or broken bones of the spine require an exercise program that includes strength and balance training. Those with spine fractures need to learn proper postural alignment for everyday activity, and should consult with your Health care Professional.

Risk factors for osteoporosis include²

Unchangeable risks: e.g. Gender, age, race, family history, body frame size.

Hormone Levels: e.g. Thyroid levels

Dietary Factors: Low calcium intake, eating disorders, gastrointestinal surgery.

Use of Certain Medications: e.g. Steroids.

Medical Problems: e.g. Coeliac disease, inflammatory bowel disease, kidney or liver disease, cancer, rheumatoid arthritis.

Lifestyle Choices: e.g. Sedentary lifestyle, excessive alcohol consumption, tobacco use.

Medication to Make Your Bones Stronger

Sometimes good diet and exercise aren't enough to keep your bones strong and prevent fractures. You may need to take medication too. Talk to your doctor about what is best for you.

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2: Mayo Clinic, Sept 2023, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/osteoporosis/symptoms-causes/syc-20351968>

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