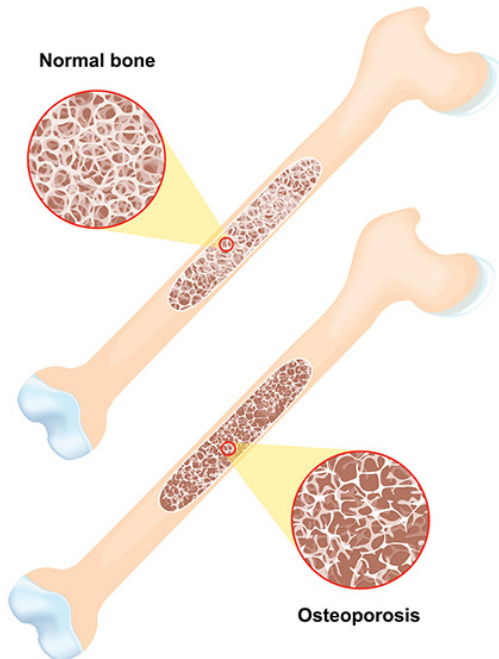


# PROTECTING YOUR BONES AND IMPROVING BONE HEALTH

## WHAT IS OSTEOPOROSIS?



Osteoporosis is a bone disease that occurs when the body loses too much bone, makes too little bone, or both. As a result, bones become weak and may break following a fall, or in serious cases, from sneezing, minor bumps, a cough, or a simple twist of the body.

Osteoporosis means “porous bone.” When osteoporosis occurs, the holes and spaces are much larger than in healthy bone.

As bones become less dense, they weaken, and are more likely to break. Approximately 1 in 2 women and up to 1 in 4 men aged 50 and older will break a bone due to osteoporosis, low bone mass (also called osteopenia), or even normal bone density. Having any fracture after the age of 50 years doubles the risk of another fracture, at least for the next two years, with the risk remaining increased for up to 10 years.

The most common way healthcare providers measure bone health is through a bone density test, also called a DXA scan. All women aged 65 and older and all men aged 70 and older should get a bone density test. Please talk to your healthcare provider about getting tested sooner if you have a family history of osteoporosis, have other conditions that can cause bone loss, or are age 50 or older and have had a broken bone.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT YOUR BONES?

### EAT FOODS THAT ARE GOOD FOR BONE HEALTH

The foods that you eat can affect your bones. If you eat a well-balanced diet with plenty of dairy, fish, fruits and vegetables, you should get enough of the nutrients you need every day. Avoid smoking, limit alcohol to 2-3 drinks per day, and limit caffeinated beverages to 2 per day.

### GET ENOUGH CALCIUM AND VITAMIN D

Food is the best source of calcium. Dairy products, such as milk, yogurt and cheese are high in calcium. Certain green vegetables and other foods contain calcium in smaller amounts. Some juices, breakfast foods, soy milk, almond milk, cereals, snacks, breads and bottled water have added calcium. Women over age 50 and men over age 70 need 1,000 mg of calcium daily. Men and women over age 50 also need 800-1,000 IU of Vitamin D each day. Your body makes Vitamin D from sunlight, but it may be difficult for some people to get enough from sunlight and food alone. If you need help choosing a Calcium or Vitamin D supplement, ask your healthcare provider to recommend one.





## ENGAGE IN REGULAR EXERCISE

There are two types of exercise to build and maintain strong bones: weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening.

Weight-bearing exercises include activities such as walking, dancing, jogging, and climbing stairs.

Muscle-strengthening exercises, also known as resistance exercises, include lifting weights, using resistance bands, or even lifting your own body weight such as rising from a chair, performing certain yoga poses, tai chi or balance exercises. Consult your healthcare provider before beginning any exercise program.



Physical therapists and exercise professionals, with experience in osteoporosis, can help you develop a safe exercise plan to help prevent osteoporosis. If you already have osteoporosis, they can help you stay fracture-free. Your exercise professional will perform a comprehensive screening to determine your baseline level and design a safe and appropriate exercise plan that may also include posture and balance exercises to prevent injuries and falls.

## TREATMENT & MEDICATION

There are many safe and effective medications available to slow down the loss of bone, and reduce the risk of breaking a bone. If you break a bone, this means you have a higher chance of breaking another bone. Medication may prevent and/or reduce the risk of a second fracture.

These medications come in a range of formulations, from daily tablets to yearly intravenous infusions. There is no best medication for everyone. The one that is best for you depends on many factors. Your health history and preferences are considerations. There are different options, and your healthcare provider can determine which one is a fit for your needs.

Some medications maintain bone and prevent loss, while other medications primarily build bone. One agent does both.

To find out how your treatment is working, your healthcare provider will repeat your bone density test and may also order lab tests to check your progress. Remember, while you may not see large improvements in your bone density test results, the goal is largely to stop even more bone loss and prevent fractures. Osteoporosis is a lifelong issue, and your treatment plan may change over time. Treatment can reduce your risk of fracture, and in some cases reduce your risk of death.



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