

BEST BITES FOR BONE HEALTH



Living with osteoporosis can feel overwhelming, but your daily food choices truly matter. Meals rich in calcium, vitamin D, protein, and other bone-building minerals help maintain bone strength, reduce fracture risk, and support overall health.

This handout highlights simple “Best Bites” you and your caregivers can enjoy together to keep bones stronger for life.

CALCIUM



Calcium helps build and maintain strong bones. ¹ Research shows that higher calcium intake supports better bone structure and slows bone loss. ¹

Try to include calcium-rich foods every day to strengthen bones. ¹

RECOMMENDED AMOUNTS OF CALCIUM FOR BONE HEALTH:²

- Adults 19-50: 1,000 mg per day
- Adult Men 51- 70: 1,000 mg per day
- Adult Women 51-70: 1200 mg per day
- Adults 71+: 1200mg per day

VITAMIN D



Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium-the foundation for bone strength. Without enough Vitamin D, even a calcium-rich diet cannot strengthen bones. ³ Low vitamin D can cause weaker bones, faster bone loss, and higher fracture risk. ³

RECOMMENDED AMOUNTS OF VITAMIN D FOR BONE HEALTH:³

- Adults 19-70: 600 IU (15mcg) per day
- Adults 71+: 800 IU (20 mcg) per day

PROTEIN



Protein supports muscle strength, which helps protect bones and prevent falls. ⁴ It also repairs tissues after injury and helps the body build new bone. Older adults who eat enough protein have better bone density and lower frailty risk. ⁴

Aim for consistent protein at every meal.

RECOMMENDED AMOUNTS OF PROTEIN FOR BONE HEALTH:⁴

- Adults: 0.8g per kg of body weight per day
- Older adults: 1.0-1.2 g per kg of body weight per day for best bone and muscle support

MAGNESIUM & POTASSIUM



Magnesium and potassium work together to support bone structure, muscle function, and balance. ⁵ They help regulate calcium and reduce bone loss. Diets rich in these minerals are linked to stronger bones and overall wellness. ⁵

RECOMMENDED AMOUNTS OF POTASSIUM AND MAGNESIUM FOR BONE HEALTH:

Magnesium:⁵

- Adult Women 19+:310-320 mg per day
- Adult Men 19+: 400-420 mg per day

Potassium:⁶

- Adult Men 19+:3,400 mg per day
- Adult Women 19+:2,600 mg per day

SMART SWAPS FOR BEST BITES AND STRONGER BONES

Simple everyday food swaps to help people living with osteoporosis, and their caregivers, meet daily goals for calcium, vitamin D, protein, and bone-strengthening minerals

INSTEAD OF...

TRY THIS!



SODA



CALCIUM-FORTIFIED MILK OR WATER



WHIPPED CREAM



LOW-FAT YOGURT WITH FRUIT



BUTTER



OLIVE OIL OR AVOCADO

INSTEAD OF...

TRY THIS!



WHITE PASTA



FORTIFIED WHOLE-GRAIN PASTA



CHIPS



ROASTED CHICKPEAS OR NUTS



FISH STICKS



BAKED SALMON OR TUNA

These easy swaps make it simple to strengthen bones and meet daily goals for calcium, vitamin D, protein, and bone-supporting minerals.

EVERYDAY TIPS BOX

- ✓ Add a calcium or protein food to every meal
- ✓ Choose Vitamin D food or fortified options
- ✓ Keep bone-healthy snacks nearby
- ✓ Choose whole grains for extra magnesium and potassium

BEST BITE SWEET TREAT

Prunes are a naturally sweet and nutritious way to make smarter swaps in your day!

Use prunes as a treat to swap for candy or as an ingredient swap for muffins, sauces or smoothies. Prunes contain vitamins and minerals that work together to protect the bones, including fiber, vitamin K, magnesium, potassium, boron, copper, and polyphenols.⁸



REFERENCES

¹ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10652183/>

² <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Calcium-Consumer/>

³ <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/VitaminD-HealthProfessional/>

⁴ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10382330/>

⁵ <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Magnesium-HealthProfessional/>

⁶ <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Potassium-Consumer/>

⁷ <https://www.sunsweet.com/products/benefits-of-prunes?srsId=AfmB0oorgo8IVsYYUAivnq8vw03wuCS63hR52BX-UnrB0muuz8-GkopF>

⁸ Arjmandi, et al. Nutrients. Bone-Protective Effects of Dried Plum in Postmenopausal Women: Efficacy and Possible Mechanisms. 2017, 9, 496: doi:10.3390/nug050496