



January/February Support Group Leaders Curriculum

A Bone-Healthy You in 2022

The stats are staggering: one in two women and one in four men over age 50 will break a bone due to osteoporosis. The New Year is here, and millions of Americans will work to achieve aspirational goals for their good health and well-being. With the extremely high prevalence of fractures, the Bone Health and Osteoporosis Foundation (BHOFF) recommends that you set yourself up for success and make 2022 the year of a bone healthy you! Think about the most popular New Year's resolutions -- from watching your diet to exercising more to drinking less to stopping smoking -- all of these lifestyle practices can easily become part of your daily routine and will help to keep bones strong and healthy. Position yourself for success by following these daily healthy habits, which will help you stay bone strong!

Nutrition is Key to Keeping Bones Healthy

- Visit <https://www.bonehealthandosteoporosis.org/patients/treatment/nutrition/> for nutrition guidelines, a list of Good-for-Your Bones Foods and simple to digest tips for eating to achieve good bone health. There is also a listing of valuable resources for you to review and share.
- Calcium and vitamin D are essential to building strong, dense bones when you're young and to keeping them strong and healthy as you age. You can find out more about these important nutrients here: <https://www.bonehealthandosteoporosis.org/patients/treatment/calciumvitamin-d/>. Topics include how much you need, various sources of these critical nutrients and excellent information about supplements.

Exercise and Be Bone Strong

It's never too late to start exercising. It is widely recognized that regular physical activity can increase your muscle strength, improve your balance and posture and decrease your risk of falls. Exercising if you have osteoporosis means finding the safest, most enjoyable activities for you given your overall health and your risk of fractures. There's no one-size-fits-all prescription and the good news is that there are plenty of options!

According to the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/), as you age, it's important to protect your bones, joints and muscles – they support your body and help you move. Keeping bones, joints and muscles healthy can help ensure that you're able to do your daily activities and be physically active. Doing aerobic, muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening physical activity at a moderately-intense level can **slow the loss of bone density**.

Visit <https://www.bonehealthandosteoporosis.org/patients/treatment/exercisesafe-movement/> for a comprehensive list of resources including weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercises, vital information on preventing injury and moving safely as well as a lengthy list of resources.

Cheers to Less Alcohol Consumption

Alcohol consumption can negatively affect bone health for several reasons: excessive alcohol interferes with the balance of calcium, which we know is an essential nutrient for healthy bones. Calcium balance may be further disrupted by alcohol's ability to interfere with the production of vitamin D, which is critical for calcium absorption. BHOFF recommends limiting consumption of alcoholic beverages.

No Ifs, Ands or Butts

According to [NIH](https://www.nih.gov/), studies have shown a direct relationship between tobacco use and decreased bone density. The best thing smokers can do to protect their bones and overall health is to quit smoking.