BONE BASICS
Bones are living, growing tissue. They stay healthy through a constant process of repair, renewal, and mineral release. As we age, the remodeling process can become unbalanced. More old bone gets removed than new bone gets created. Over time, this leaves bones weaker and more likely to break. It’s never too early or too late to improve bone health. Osteoporosis prevention should begin in childhood and continue throughout life.

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 from a fall or, in serious cases, from sneezing or minor bumps. Approximately 54 million Americans have osteoporosis or low bone mass.

Breaking a bone is a serious complication of osteoporosis, especially with older adults. Osteoporotic bone breaks are most likely to occur in the hip, spine, or wrist, but other bones can break too. In addition to causing permanent pain, osteoporosis causes some people to lose height. When osteoporosis affects vertebrae, or the bones of the spine, it often leads to a stooped or hunched posture.

EAT HEALTHY TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN STRONG BONES
Eating a well-balanced diet with plenty of dairy, fish, fruits, and vegetable should provide enough of the nutrients needed to build and maintain strong bones. It’s important to eat a variety of calcium-rich foods every day because it is an essential building block for bones. Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium, among other things, so it is also important for building and maintaining bone health. Other nutrients in a healthy diet also help to maintain bone health throughout the lifespan.

NEWER RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT VITAMINS AND MINERALS SEEM TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT THE BONE, INCLUDING

- Fiber
- Vitamin K
- Magnesium
- Potassium
- Boron
- Copper
- Polyphenols

THE BONE HEALTH AND OSTEOPOROSIS FOUNDATION (BHOF) RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING DAILY AMOUNTS OF CALCIUM FOR BONE HEALTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Females 50 and Younger</th>
<th>Females 51 and Older</th>
<th>Males 70 and Younger</th>
<th>Males 71 and Older</th>
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<tr>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>1,000 MG/DAY</td>
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CALCIUM RICH FOODS
In addition to building bones and keeping them healthy, calcium enables blood to clot, muscles to contract, and the heart to beat. About 99% of the calcium in the human body is in the bones and teeth. Fortunately, there are many foods that are good sources of calcium (and other healthy nutrients). 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, soymilk, cereals, snacks, breads, and bottled water have added calcium.

A WELL-BALANCED DIET
According to the USDA’s Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025, current low intakes of nutrient-dense foods and beverages across food groups has resulted in underconsumption of some nutrients and dietary components. Calcium, potassium, dietary fiber, and vitamin D are considered dietary components of public health concern for the general U.S. population. To have a well-balanced diet, the Dietary Guidelines offer a list of foods that provide at least 130 mg of calcium; 280 mg of potassium; 2.8 g of dietary fiber; 80 IU of vitamin D; and 1.8 mg of iron.

PRUNES
1/4 cup of prunes contains 319 mg of potassium. Studies show that prunes can help lower the risk of bone loss and osteoporosis in women and men.

FISH
Sardines and salmon are two examples of fish that contain vitamin D. The Dietary Guidelines recommend that adults get 600 IU of vitamin D each day.

CEREAL
1/2 cup of ready-to-eat, high fiber, unsweetened cereal can contain 15 g of fiber.

SPINACH
1 cup of cooked spinach contains 6.4 mg of iron.

CLINICAL RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT: PRUNES AND BONE HEALTH
Research supports that enjoying 5-6 prunes per day is a valuable food-based strategy that can be used to preserve hip bone mineral density and reduce inflammatory mediators in postmenopausal women.

A SWEET TIP
Swap prune puree for butter in your favorite recipes to:
❖ Reduce the nutrients we need to eat less of—like saturated fat
❖ Add the nutrients we need more of—potassium and fiber—to benefit bone health and overall health