

Most people should be able to get enough calcium through healthy eating without the need for additional supplements. Some persons may not be getting the amount of calcium they need as they avoid dairy products because of their perceived fat content.

Skimmed milk contains only 0.3% fat and skimmed/semi-skimmed milk contains more calcium than full fat milk.

Calcium rich foods include dairy products such as milk, cheese, tofu and low fat yoghurt. Other foods which are rich in calcium are green leafy vegetables, dried fruit, oranges, almonds and sesame seeds.

- **Regular weight bearing exercise** is exercise where the weight of your body is taken by your bones. This is a very good way of preventing or decreasing the rate of bone loss and therefore of developing Osteoporosis. Examples of weight bearing exercise are walking, walking and running up and down the stairs, aerobics, dancing, jogging and skipping
- **Adequate intake or production of Vitamin D** in the skin. The main source of Vitamin D in our bodies is our skin, where Vitamin D is formed by the action of the sun and is then stored in body fat. Vitamin D rich foods include breakfast cereals, oily fish, egg yolk and fortified margarine
- **Limiting caffeine-containing drinks**, such as coffee and cola to two drinks a day
- **Stopping smoking**
- **Reducing alcohol consumption** to the recommended level - not more than two drinks per day.

What medications are available to treat Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis can be treated and the risk of fractures decreased. There are various treatment options available which you would discuss with your specialist. If you get enough calcium and exercise, do not smoke and limit your caffeine and alcohol intake, this will help you respond better to the treatment.

*A healthy lifestyle helps you remain active, feel healthy and enjoy life!
The earlier you take action, the better!*



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Ministry for Health, the Elderly
and Community Care

Osteoporosis



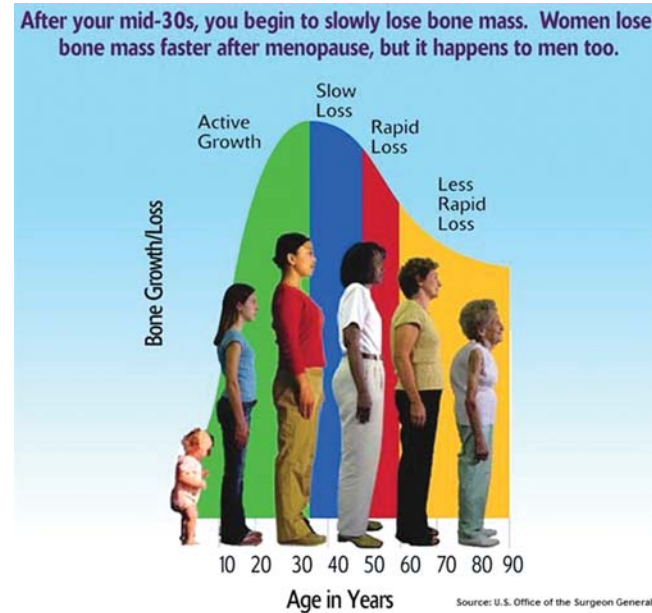
Take Care of Your Bones!

Osteoporosis - What is it?

Osteoporosis means porous fragile bones. It is a common bone condition which leads to loss in bone mass, with bones becoming more fragile and at a greater risk of fractures. Bones that have a low bone mass can be easily broken following a minor fall or injury. The most common fractures occur in the spine, hips and wrists.

Bone mass builds up during childhood and adolescence and is at its peak in the twenties. After the age of forty years, bone mass starts decreasing. Bone mass loss is faster in women than in men and the rate of bone loss in women becomes faster in the years after the menopause. Osteoporosis is therefore commoner with increasing age and is twice as common in women as it is in men. In fact one out of two women over fifty years of age will fracture a bone.

As Osteoporosis is a common condition, the financial implications are considerable. There are direct costs, such as hospital care and also indirect costs. The latter include rehabilitation costs and days of work lost by persons with Osteoporosis and by their relatives.

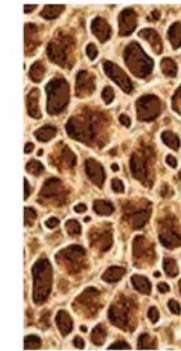


Fractures result in:

- pain
- admission to hospitals and increased chance of needing care in a nursing home
- Disability and loss of independence - loss of function and independence among survivors is considerable, with 40% unable to walk independently and 60% requiring assistance a year later.



Normal bone



Bone with Osteoporosis

How would you know if you have Osteoporosis?

In the past, most people did not know they had Osteoporosis until they broke a bone. Today a Bone Mineral Density test can show if you have Osteoporosis or if you are losing calcium from your bones at an unacceptable rate. This test is performed using a Bone Density scanner that scans your spine and hip. The scan takes about 15 minutes and does not cause any pain. The amount of X-Rays one is exposed to during a Bone Density scan is equal to 1/50th of the X-Ray exposure one receives when having a Chest X-Ray taken.



What increases the chance of having Osteoporosis?

Losing bone is a natural process that happens as you get older. However, not everyone gets Osteoporosis. The following risk factors increase the chance of developing Osteoporosis at an earlier age or of having more severe Osteoporosis in later life:

Lifestyle Factors:

- A diet low in calcium or/and an unhealthy diet e.g. lack of milk, yoghurt, cheese, fruit and vegetables
- Physical inactivity or/ and long periods of immobility
- Smoking
- Alcohol
- A daily intake of three or more cups of coffee and cola drinks
- A deficiency of Vitamin D, which could be due to insufficient intake of Vitamin D or insufficient sun exposure

Other Factors:

- Being underweight with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of less than 18.5kg/m².
- Thin and small body frame
- Being female
- Early menopause - under 45 years of age
- Having a father/ mother or siblings with Osteoporosis
- Being Caucasian (white) or Asian
- Conditions that affect the absorption of food from the bowels such as Coeliac disease and Crohn's disease
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Taking medications containing steroids

What can you do to have healthy bones?

There are some risk factors which one cannot do anything about.

However, there are other risk factors which one can take control of. These are the things you need to do to keep your bones healthy and to have a healthy lifestyle in general.

- **A healthy, balanced calcium-rich diet.** Milk is the best source of calcium intake. The recommended daily intake of calcium is that of three to four servings of calcium a day, if you are between nine to eighteen years old or are older than fifty one years. For persons in other age groups three servings of calcium are recommended.

One serving of calcium is found in:

- One glass of low-fat or fat-free milk
- One cup of low-fat or fat-free yoghurt
- Two cups of low-fat or fat-free cottage cheese
- A matchbox-size piece of cheese
- Three cups of broccoli



("One cup" measure is equivalent to 225g of the particular food or drink)