

HEALTH FOR LIFE

BUILDING HEALTHY BONES FOR A LIFETIME



Several factors contribute to bone health, such as age, gender and genetics. Adopting a lifestyle including calcium, vitamin D and being active, is a great long-term health strategy towards positive bone health. In later life bone fragility comes with greater risk of fractures and/or disease, such as osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is prevalent in Australia, over 4 million people aged 50 years+ have either osteoporosis or poor bone health. Females are more likely to suffer from poor bone health due to rapid change in hormones during menopause. And, although osteoporosis may occur later in life, it can originate in youth developing over time without warning.

So, what role does calcium play?

Calcium combines with other minerals to form hard crystals giving bones their structure, as well as approximately 30-35% bone mass & strength. Research shows us that including calcium rich foods throughout your youth could positively impact overall bone health as you age, versus a low calcium intake which may adversely affect bone health (fragility & disease) in adults. In later life bone fragility comes with greater risk of fractures and/or disease, such as osteoporosis.

Building your calcium reservoir

Dairy products are rich sources of calcium easily supplying around 60% of the calcium we eat. Currently 8 out of 10 Australians are not consuming enough dairy foods, this includes girls. Research shows only a few girls actually meet the daily requirements for calcium during the critical bone-forming years. For those who don't enjoy dairy foods, other food sources include:

- lactose-free milk or fortified milk alternatives
- tofu
- nuts (almonds with the skin on)
- seeds (sesame)
- dark green vegetables – tip it takes 8 cups of spinach to match the calcium from 1 cup of milk
- fortified bread
- oysters, small fish with bones (sardines, tuna, salmon).

DID YOU KNOW?

**Osteoporosis affects 1 in 5 women aged 65 years+?
Or, that 1 in 3 adults 50 years+ die within 12 months of suffering a hip fracture!**



TIPS TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

Don't wait to get started! Bone health is a lifetime commitment. Here's our 3 top tips to help you build your bone health and reducing your risk of bone fragility.

1 Get eating

It is suggested a wholefood approach including plenty of fresh fruit (in particular dried fruit such as prunes) and vegetables is another way to armour yourself against bone fragility and deterioration. Also ensuring we consume enough protein as we age. Consider protein from eggs, fish and meat to help provide key nutrients for bone health.

| Minimum recommended number of serves from the dairy food group | | |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Age (years) | No. of serves per day |
| Men | 19-70 | 2½ |
| | 70+ | 3½ |
| Women | 19-50 | 2½ |
| | 51+ | 4 |
| | Pregnant or Breastfeeding | 2½ |
| Boys | 2-3 | 1½ |
| | 4-8 | 2 |
| | 9-11 | 2½ |
| | 12-18 | 3½ |
| Girls | 2-3 | 1½ |
| | 4-8 | 1½ |
| | 9-11 | 3 |
| | 12-18 | 3½ |

one serve of dairy is equivalent to:



It's recommended more than 50% of intake from dairy foods is reduced-fat varieties

2 Get moving

Studies show being physically active may lower the possibility of developing osteoporosis. Completing 30 minutes of weight bearing or resistance training 3+ times per week could make all the difference, as well as improving balance, stability and strength.

3 Get sun smart!

Vitamin D is a key bone nutrient for bone health. Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium via the intestines and controls the levels in our blood. We only receive a small amount of Vitamin D from the foods we eat with sun exposure delivering 80% of our daily need. So, on a clear day head outside during mid-morning or afternoon for 5-10 minutes to get your dose of vitamin D.



Healthy, strong bones are key to maintaining a healthy, active & independent life, especially as we age. Consult us today for a one-on-one consultation with an Accredited Practising Dietitian, you'll receive the help and advice you need specifically for you.

Nutrition NSW is the peak body for evidence-based nutrition & preventative health
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