

HOWE
Sound
PHARMACY



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825 Gibsons Way
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We are~

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...from your Neighbourhood Pharmacy.

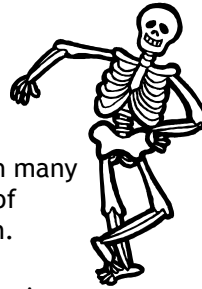


DEM BONES ~ KEEPING THEM STRONG

Childhood isn't the only time we have to worry about broken bones!

According to the Osteoporosis Society of Canada:

- Four out of 10 white women age 50 or older will break a hip, spine, or wrist during their lives.
- Nearly one in five hip fracture patients ends up in a nursing home
- Physicians diagnose only a third of spinal fractures, even though many cause back pain, loss of height, and depression.
- By the year 2030, the number of hip fractures is expected to quadruple (to 122,000 per year) as the population ages.
- Roughly 1.4 million Canadians have osteoporosis and another two million are at risk.



Why is this happening?

Blame it on estrogen. As women go through menopause, most lose bone density rapidly. Unless they take estrogen, the drop off in hormone levels triggers a breakdown. A decline in estrogen also weakens bone in men as they age, though less dramatically. No one can avoid all the loss. **It could possibly be cut by a third with calcium, vitamin D and exercise.**

Can anything help? Many people know about calcium and vitamin D, but there is a whole spectrum of other nutrients that protect bone. People think of bone as static but in fact, it's always being broken down and rebuilt and that process is sensitive to a delicate balance of nutrients.

In both men and women, a decline in estrogen makes the intestine and kidney absorb less calcium and signals bone to slow construction and speed up

demolition. It is always a balance between bones building up and breaking down. As you get older, the balance tips towards breaking down.

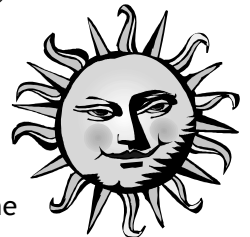
During menopause women lose bone at the rate of about three percent per year, from places such as the spine; from the arm or hip, about one percent per year. Four to eight years after menopause begins, the bone loss slows. It averages one percent per year.

Calcium and Vitamin D: If you are not getting enough calcium and vitamin D, your bones break down to supply calcium to the rest of the body.

The typical woman consumes 800 mg of calcium a day from food and supplements, while recommended levels range from 1000 mg (for women aged 19 to 50) to 1200 mg (for women over 50). A negative balance of only 50-100 mg of calcium per day over a long period of time is sufficient to produce osteoporosis.

It is tougher to gauge how much vitamin D people get, since some comes from exposure to sunlight. But it is clear that the vitamin's role is crucial. Vitamin D strengthens not just bone, but muscle. The latest evidence on vitamin D has led many researchers to call for raising the recommended levels; 400 IU a day for those 51-70 years and 600 IU over 70.

Exercise: Strain is good. The body constantly monitors how much strain muscles put on bone. More strain signals the body to build bone; less strain sends a message to break down bone. Some people make bone loss worse by not doing enough exercise. If you are not active, you will have weaker bones. For



Working with you towards a healthier lifestyle.

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We will also do a blood glucose check (\$3 charge).

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older people, exercise is crucial because it lowers the risk of falling with increased strength and balance. The type of exercise isn't important, as long as you are using your bones to work against gravity. That means almost any activity except swimming (the water holds you up so you are not working against gravity) or bicycling (you are supported by the bike).



The Effect of other Nutrients on Bones:

Vitamin K: If you are vitamin K deficient, you don't get as much bone matrix or as much bone. Presently, it is not really known how much vitamin K is needed for bones, but in the meantime, the simple solution is to eat more vegetables and a greater variety of vegetables easily provides enough vitamin K. **Protein:** Some scientists find that elderly people who



have had a hip fracture gain more bone if they are given a protein supplement. Others argue that protein is bad for bones because it robs the body by making the kidneys excrete more calcium (eating more protein means losing more calcium in your urine). The answer may depend on the amount of calcium you get. If you have a calcium intake that's adequate to offset the waste through the kidney, then maybe you can tip the balance towards bone growth.

Potassium and Magnesium: These nutrients help neutralize acid in the body. Some studies find greater bone density in people who consume more magnesium, which is found in whole grains, nuts and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables are packed with potassium. However, too much of it from supplements is dangerous and may cause heart arrhythmias. There are people who shouldn't take potassium because they have trouble getting rid of it and that includes those who take medications that hinder potassium excretion (like diuretics Aldactone, Midamor and Dyrenium) and those, especially diabetics, who have impaired kidney function.



Vitamin A: It is not too little vitamin A, but too

much, that can put bones at risk. Vitamin A, called retinol, is found in liver and other foods, but a bigger source is fortified foods like Ensure, margarine, some energy bars and multivitamins. A multivitamin with no more than 2000 or 3000 IU of vitamin A from retinol is suggested. (The ingredient list will usually read *vitamin A acetate* or *palmitate*. Don't count any beta carotene in the supplement). Beta carotene, which is found in fruits, vegetables and some fortified foods, is converted into



vitamin A in the body. **Sodium:** Sodium (as does caffeine) increases calcium excretion. According to a study, every 500 mg of sodium (from salt) causes post-menopausal women to lose an extra 10 mg of calcium. Taking more calcium can offset the loss.

Foods that can affect bone loss:

Fruits and Vegetables: Some studies find denser bones in older people who consume more fruits and vegetables. They may protect bones by making the urine more alkaline. Canadians eat more foods that



produce acid as their diet is high in grains and protein foods, which generate acid residues, and low in fruits and vegetables which produce alkali. (Milk is neutral). Too much acid is bad for the system, so the body spends a lot of time and effort getting rid of it, which means neutralizing or buffering the acid with an alkali. The biggest reservoir of alkali in the body is bone. **Alcohol:** Heavy alcohol intake is a risk factor for osteoporosis, but smaller amounts, about one drink a day, are beneficial for women.

Alcohol may strengthen bones because it raises estrogen levels. Estrogen may also explain why thin women have a greater risk of osteoporosis than overweight women, as obesity raises estrogen levels.



Unfortunately, that is the same reason why both alcohol and obesity increase the risk of breast cancer. **Soy:** Soybeans are rich in plant estrogens called isoflavones. Can they replace the bone-boosting estrogens that women lose when they go through menopause? It is too early to say.

Questions about certain medications? Not sure what your body needs to combat the myriad of ailments that are out there today? Ask the friendly staff at Howe Sound Pharmacy. There are lots of interesting hand-outs on many different topics that you can take home for reference. For example regarding osteoporosis; we have information on risk assessment and lists for sources of vitamin K, calcium and other nutrients.

Health care for your body and mind.