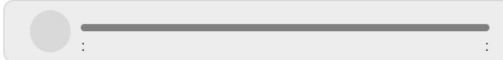


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Updated on November 4, 2025

Bone Health

Strong bones start early and last a lifetime. Learn how nutrition, exercise, and proactive care help keep your bones healthy from childhood through adulthood.

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From storing calcium to protecting your organs, bones are a vital part of life. They also keep your muscles in place and give your body structure. What can we do to support the health of our bones throughout our lives?

Building strong bones in childhood

Did you know that an infant has about 300 bones when they are born? These bones will fuse together throughout childhood to become the 206 bones that adults have.

Throughout childhood, our bones do most of their growing. From the time we are babies to our early 20's our bones are still growing and developing to support our bodies for the rest of our lives. Bones are mostly done growing by the time we are 20 years old. This is a vital time in life to focus on the things that will support bone development. It is important for parents to make sure that children are getting the nutrients their bones need to grow to their full potential.

To help our children's bones grow big and strong, we need to make sure they are getting enough calcium, vitamin D to help your body absorb calcium, and exercise.

Foods high in calcium include:

- Dairy
- Almonds
- Broccoli
- Leafy greens
- Fortified cereals and juices.

Vitamin D can be obtained from

- Sunlight
- Fish
- Egg yolks
- Mushrooms
- Fortified cereals and juices.

When it comes to exercise that supports bone development, weight bearing exercises are encouraged. Activities like running, jumping, climbing, and dancing are great weight bearing exercises that will support bone development.



Protecting bone health in adulthood

After childhood, our bones can still grow and heal but the process takes a lot more time. In adulthood, our bones are more likely to degenerate and become weaker. Protecting your bones in adulthood takes the same steps that building them throughout your life did. We still need to be getting calcium and vitamin D, as well as doing weight bearing exercises. Your exercise will likely look different than it did when you were a child. You could include more weightlifting and resistance training in your normal routine. Doing these things will help strengthen and prevent your bones becoming weak as you become older.

Osteoporosis

As you age, you become more at risk of developing osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is a disease that develops as bones become weak and brittle. This is a disease that can affect anyone but research has found the greatest risk is to women who have already gone through menopause. This happens in later adulthood because your bones start to deteriorate and your new bone production is unable to keep up with the rate of deterioration. Osteoporosis can cause fractures and broken bones.

Osteoporosis is incurable but it is treatable. Treatment of osteoporosis includes continuing your preventative actions (calcium, vitamin D, and weight bearing exercises.) It can also include medicine.

Knowing how to support healthy bone development and keep them healthy throughout your life is important in reducing your risk of osteoporosis and maintaining a high quality of life. Eating healthy and exercising will help you and your family have your best lives.

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