

Exercise and Osteoporosis



What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a common condition which causes bones to become fragile over time.

The leading causes of this condition are the genes you inherit and getting older, as well as:

- Not moving enough
- Not getting enough calcium and vitamin D
- Smoking and excessive alcohol intake.

Osteoporosis can cause fractures or broken bones, which could affect your ability to move and stay independent. But by making healthy choices you can prevent and manage osteoporosis.



What can I do about it?

Doing minimal physical activity results in your bones becoming weaker. Moving your body every day is important for improving and maintaining bone health.

Most bone fractures occur because of a fall. You can reduce your risk of falling by exercising. Moderate intensity movement builds your muscle strength and improves your balance.



The benefits of exercise

Exercise provides great benefits when managing or even reversing osteoporosis. When it comes to bone health, not all exercise is equal. Bones need to experience the right amount of impact and strain. They have an amazing ability to adapt!

In response to different weights and applied stress, bones become stronger or denser. Benefits include:

- Bones stop getting weaker
- Improves general fitness
- Improves strength, mobility, balance, and coordination
- Reduces risk of bone fractures caused by falls
- Reduces pain
- Better mood and more energy.

Exercise for Osteoporosis

A great starting point is to make sure you're moving your body the recommended amount of time each day for your age. For people over 65 years old, that's 30 minutes per day.



Follow these guidelines for the prevention and management of osteoporosis:

- Try moderate intensity exercise that does not increase your pain.
- Include weight-bearing activities that increase bone strength like dancing, walking, and ping pong.
- Add strength exercises using light weights, elastic bands, and resistance cables.
- Include balance exercises to reduce the risk of falls.

Important

If you have osteoporosis, please talk to your doctor before you start a new exercise program.

Things to think about when exercising with osteoporosis:

- Try to reduce exercise that involves very fast moves or lots of strain on your joints
- Be careful when twisting and reduce any sudden or forceful movements
- Start small and slowly increase the amount of weight-bearing exercise and resistance.

Most people need an exercise program that includes moderate weight-bearing movement. But sometimes a gentler approach may be best.

Exercise is one important part of the big picture that is your health. To prevent and manage osteoporosis, addressing all the possible causes is the best strategy.

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