

Osteoporosis: Your Bone Health Guide

Medical-Surgical · Musculoskeletal / Orthopedics

Osteoporosis means your bones are thin and weak, so they break easily, even from a small fall. Good food, exercise, a safe home, and your medicine help keep your bones strong.

Get calcium and vitamin D

- Calcium goal: 1,000 to 1,200 mg a day. Get it from food first.
- Good foods: milk, yogurt, cheese, calcium-added juice, canned salmon with bones, and kale.
- Take calcium pills only if food does not give you enough. Take no more than 500 mg at a time.
- Vitamin D goal: 800 to 1,000 IU a day, or _____.

Move and protect your bones

- Walk, dance, or climb stairs most days of the week.
- Lift light weights or use stretch bands 2 to 3 days a week.
- Do not do toe touches or sit-ups.
- Stop smoking. Limit alcohol: no more than 1 drink a day for women or 2 for men.

Prevent falls at home

- Remove throw rugs, clutter, and cords.
- Use night lights, grab bars, and stair rails.
- Wear shoes with nonslip soles. Stand up slowly.

Take alendronate the right way

- Take it first thing in the morning, before you eat or drink.
- Swallow it with a full glass (8 ounces) of plain water. No coffee, juice, or milk.
- **Sit or stand for at least 30 minutes. Do not lie down.**
- Wait 30 minutes before you eat, drink, or take other medicines.

Call your provider today if you have

- Heartburn, or pain or trouble when you swallow
- Jaw pain, loose teeth, or bone showing in your mouth
- New pain in your thigh or groin
- Sudden back pain, or a fall

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have

- A fall with severe hip, leg, or back pain
- A fall and you cannot stand or put weight on your leg
- A fall with a head injury, confusion, or passing out

This handout supports, not replaces, advice from your own nurse or doctor.

Online: nclexpace.com/patient-education/osteoporosis-bone-health/patient

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