



Healthy Eating Tips for Healthy Bones

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Nutrition is imperative for a healthy weight, reducing chronic disease, and enhancing your energy. It is also vital to your bone and joint health! Here are some easy ways to ensure optimal musculoskeletal health at every age.

OPTIMIZE

- **Calcium** – Bones and teeth make up approximately 99% of the calcium in our body. Women over the age of 50 and men over the age of 70 require 1,200 milligrams daily. Good food sources include dairy, tofu, beans, sardines, dark leafy greens (such as kale, collards, spinach), nuts and seeds.
- **Vitamin D3** – Vitamin D, the sunshine vitamin, is essential for calcium absorption. Many individuals are deficient in higher latitude states (any states north of Oklahoma) because vitamin D is poorly made from the sunrays during winter months. It is highly recommended that you check your vitamin D level with your doctor and supplement if necessary. Food sources include fish, eggs, mushrooms, and fortified milk.
- **Vitamin K** – Vitamin K assists vitamin D to properly distribute calcium throughout the body and help avoid soft tissue calcification (particularly vitamin K2). Food sources include dark leafy greens (K1). K2 is produced by bacteria in fermented foods and in your gut. **Caution with blood-thinners (warfarin) use.**
- **Magnesium** – Magnesium is a common deficiency in many. It helps strengthen the bone matrix, among many other roles. Food sources include dark leafy greens, seeds, beans, and whole grains.
- **Vitamin A** – Vitamin A also plays a role in bone cell activity. Good food sources include carrots, sweet potatoes/squash, and dark leafy greens.
- **Vitamin C** – Vitamin C is required for collagen synthesis, which makes up approximately 35% of bone tissue, providing scaffolding for minerals to be deposited. Green vegetables, bell peppers, berries, oranges, and melons are excellent sources.
- **Soy Isoflavones** – Particularly for postmenopausal women, low estrogen levels are a risk factor for osteoporosis. Many foods have compounds (“phytoestrogens”) that mimic estrogen. The most studied in bone health are those from soy products (soybeans, soy milk, edamame, tofu, tempeh, and miso). Eating these foods may help mimic estrogen’s effects to help reduce the breakdown of bones.

MINIMIZE

These foods and food substances are associated with lower bone mineral density and may increase fracture risk when consumed in excess amounts:

Animal Protein	Sodium (Salt)	Soda
Caffeine	Alcohol	Sugar

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