

Osteoporosis Facts: What Teens Need to Know

The road to osteoporosis and bone deformities starts when you are young. Paying attention to your bone health now means beautiful bones in the future.

Important Things to Know:

- Teenage bodies are able to better take in and retain calcium.
- Beginning in the teenage years, our bodies add the bulk (thickness and strength) to our bones to last our entire adult lives.
- Women reach their highest bone mass by around age 25 to 30 while men build bone until age 30 to 35; after this point more bone is lost than is built up.
- The calcium %DV (percent Daily Value) for a teenager is 1,200 mg/day.

Strengthen Your Bones:

- Growing bone responds to the impact of weight bearing activity and the pull of muscle during exercise by building stronger, more dense bones. Weight bearing exercises include: jogging, dancing, jumping rope, hiking, inline skating, skateboarding.
- From ages 11 to 24 the daily requirement for calcium is 1,200 milligrams (mg).
- Bones also need vitamin D, which moves calcium from the intestine to the bloodstream and into bone.
- Vitamin A, vitamin C, magnesium and zinc, as well as protein also help build bone structure.

Behaviors That Put Your Bones at Risk:

- Skipping meals can be risky because it eliminates one chance to meet the daily requirements of calcium.
- Replacing milk with nondairy drinks like soda or fruit flavored drinks.
- Eating disorders, like anorexia and bulimia, can weaken bone.
- Tobacco products and alcohol can weaken your bones.

Adapted from factsheet: Bone Builders: Support Your Bones with Healthy Habits.
<http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content4/bone.builders.fda.html>

Compiled by Judith Chilcot, School of Nursing, University of Washington Medical Center.

Developed by the University of Washington's Center of Excellence in Women's Health and the Medical Center Patient and Family Education Services. <http://www.uwomenshealth.org/>