

Osteoporosis

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A chronic, degenerative condition that increases susceptibility to fractures of the bones.

The word Osteoporosis literally means 'porous bones'. Risk factors include aging, being female (although men do suffer but to a lesser degree), going through an early menopause, and never having had children (nulliparous). One out of 4 women and one out of 8 men develop osteoporosis in their lifetime. It develops

over many years and is a result of slow demineralisation of the bones and is usually only diagnosed after a fracture or a bone density scan.

Calcium is the most significant mineral in bones but boron, magnesium, phosphorous, zinc and Vitamin D are all necessary for the correct metabolism of calcium. Bones are constantly being broken down and rebuilt leading to a constant turnover of minerals.

Prevention is better than cure in this disease and because the infrastructure of the bone is determined by the age of 30 all you can do after that age is maintain mineralization. It is therefore necessary that our children start preventing problems at an early age. However, it is never too late to start, and age should be no barrier.

Prevention.

A diet that contains a high quantity of meat cause a high acid residue after metabolism which then requires more calcium to neutralise it and this can be drawn from the bones thus depleting the calcium in the bones. A vegetarian diet favours a good phosphorous/calcium ratio and is therefore preferable to a diet of meat and dairy products.

Alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, coffee and sugar speed calcium loss from the bones.

A diet rich in calcium is better than supplements as the calcium in food is more easily absorbed. In some studies

foods like spinach, chard, and chocolate contain calcium oxalate that binds with calcium impeding its absorption and phytates found in whole wheat and some other whole grains will also bind with calcium thus increasing phytates found in whole wheat and some other whole grains will also bind with calcium in the gut thus increasing a tendency to develop osteoporosis.

Certain drugs like steroids and some Antibiotics, especially if taken over a long time may also increase the risk of osteoporosis.

Doing regular weight bearing exercise such as brisk walking or weight lifting 4 times a week for 45minutes is highly recommended.

Sun bathing avoiding the mid day sun will help the production of Vitamin D thus helping the absorption of calcium.

Treatment.

Diet.

A meat free diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, sprouted seeds and beans and yoghurt is ideal. Lots of green leafy vegetables and adequate sources of protein is preferable.

Foods that contain phyto-oestrogens may also help to hold calcium in the bones and include, apples, brown rice, cherries, oats, olives, peanuts, plums and Soya products.

Foods that contain appropriate vitamins and minerals include almonds, barley, celery, kale, mustard greens and turnip greens. Salad should be served with cider vinegar or lemon juice to increase calcium absorption.

Taking calcium rich foods prior to bedtime is useful as far as calcium absorption goes if a little hard on the digestion.

Milk and dairy sources are not a particularly a good source of absorbable calcium and for this reason should not be increased in the diet.

Sources Of Dietary Calcium (mg /100g)

Milk Products.

- Cheddar Cheese 800
- Camembert Cheese 380
- Yoghurt 180
- Cows Milk 120
- Cottage Cheese 60

Fish

- Whitebait 860
- Sardines 550
- Shrimps 320
- Prawns 150
- Haddock 110
- Oysters 110

Nuts Seeds & Beans

- Almonds 250
- Soya flour 250
- Brazils 180
- Haricot Beans 180
- Red Kidney Beans 140
- Tofu 128

- Sunflower Seeds 120
- Buckwheat 114
- Butter Beans 85
- Walnuts 61
- Peanuts 61
- Soya Milk 21
- Sesame Seeds 11

Vegetables & Fruit

- Parsley 330
- Dried Figs 280
- Turnip Greens 250
- Kale 225
- Watercress 220
- Broccoli 100
- Dried Apricots 92

Other

- Kelp 1093
- Black Strap Molasses 579
- Black treacle 500
- Carob Powder 352
- Brewers Yeast 210
- Tripe 150
- Egg Yolk 130
- Cocoa powder 130

Vitamins & Minerals.

- Vitamin B Complex 25-50mg 2 or 3 times daily
- Vitamin C 1000 - 2000 once or twice daily to bowel tolerance.
- Vitamin D 400- 1000mg per day
- Magnesium 400mg twice daily
- Vitamin E 400 - 800 IU per day

Calcium is often supplied with Vit D and magnesium already in it. Check producers.

Remember the best way is to get your requirements in food which is more easily absorbed. For good retention of vitamins do not overcook food.

Cod liver oil or halibut liver oil daily.

Apple cider vinegar, water and honey twice daily. Use a good organic cider vinegar.