



Use it or lose it

Remaining physically active as you grow older is one of the best ways to reduce falls, and weight bearing exercises help to build bone density. Research has shown that you are never too old to start reaping the rewards of being more active.

Activities such as bowls, short walks, housework, shopping, Tai Chi, dancing, golf, croquet and gardening can all help.

Physical activity in moderate amounts is safe if you follow a few rules:

- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.
- Make sure there is enough space and there are no hazards such as loose rugs or wires.
- Warm up gently.
- Work a bit harder every day to improve performance. Aim for gradual improvements.



This literature is produced as an acknowledgement of the life and work of Desmond and Hildergard Atherton. Desmond worked as a GP in Coventry and Hildergard was a founder Trustee of Coventry Churches Housing Association (now Touchstone Housing Association) and The ExtraCare Charitable Trust. Desmond's strength and patience towards those in his care and Hildergard's commitment and support to our charity's work have influenced the development of well-being service that is now benefiting our residents.



Take extra care of your
bones



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What is Osteoporosis?

Our bones are a living functioning material which give us shape, movement and protect some of our major organs such as lungs and heart. Bones need to be strong and dense and are made from a thick outer shell and a strong inner mesh which looks like honeycomb. Osteoporosis occurs when the holes between the mesh become bigger - osteoporosis literally means 'porous bones'. As the skeleton becomes more porous a minor knock or fall can break a bone, usually in the wrist, spine or hip.

Who gets Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis affects 1 in 3 women and 1 in 12 men over the age of 50 but can also affect people of all ages, although some bone loss occurs naturally to everyone as they get older. Osteoporosis can largely be prevented and treated. Broken bones due to osteoporosis are not an inevitable part of ageing.

Who is at risk?

Osteoporosis affects some people more than others; women are at risk if they lack the female hormone oestrogen at an early age (before the age of 45) due to menopause or hysterectomy, with the loss of both ovaries. Men are at risk if they have low levels of the hormone testosterone. Risks are also increased due to the following.

- You take high dose corticosteroid tablets (for conditions such as arthritis and asthma).
- You have a family history of osteoporosis. Perhaps your mother had broken a hip in the past.
- You have a medical condition which affects the absorption of foods such as Crohns disease, celiac disease or ulcerative colitis, or if through other medical problems you are immobile for a long time.
- You have low body weight.
- You drink excessive amounts of alcohol or smoke heavily.

Every day eating and tips

Eat a well balanced diet including fruit, vegetables, bread, potatoes or pasta, cereals, milk and dairy products and protein such as meat, fish, eggs and nuts. Calcium is vital for strong teeth and bones and most people should be able to get enough calcium through healthy eating, but here are some easy tips to boost calcium.

- Calcium rich cereals are a good start to the day, and milk increases the calcium levels.
- Snack on nuts or dried fruits such as apricots and figs; both are excellent sources of calcium.
- Calcium enriched waters and orange juice can be a useful source.
- Low fat milk dairy products such as yoghurt and fromage frais are excellent sources of calcium.
- Don't bin bones when you open tinned fish like sardines; mash them into the fish and you won't notice them, but you will benefit from the calcium they contain.
- Tofu, a vegetable protein made from Soya beans, is high in calcium and low in fat.
- Green leafy vegetables like watercress, broccoli and curly kale are good sources of calcium.
- The National Osteoporosis Society Bone friendly logo also identifies foods that are a good source of calcium.



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