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SP526-H-Osteoporosis - Are You Robbing Your Bones

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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Know Calcium-Rich Foods

- ❑ Yogurt
- ❑ Cheese
- ❑ Milk: Skim, 1 percent, 2 percent, whole
- ❑ Cottage cheese
- ❑ Calcium-enriched juices, breads and cereals
- ❑ Calcium-enriched cottage cheese and yogurt
- ❑ Leafy greens
- ❑ Soy foods
- ❑ Canned fish with bones

Consider a Calcium Supplement if You Can't Get Enough Calcium From Food

- ❑ Read the label. Elemental calcium is the amount of absorbable calcium in the supplement. Divide doses throughout the day. Your body can only absorb 500 mg to 600 mg of calcium at one time.

Questions to Ask Your Health Care Provider

- ❑ Should I worry about getting osteoporosis?
- ❑ How can I keep from losing bone?
- ❑ Should I consider hormone replacement therapy? If yes, what are the benefits and risks?
- ❑ Should I take medicine to preserve my bones? If yes, what are the benefits and risks of the medicine?
- ❑ Should I have a bone density test? Will my insurance carrier pay for it?
- ❑ How often should I have my bone density measured?
- ❑ Should I take a calcium supplement? If so, which one?

For more information on osteoporosis and health, visit the UT Extension Osteoporosis Web site at http://fcs.tennessee.edu/healthsafety/index.htm. Or contact your county Extension office.

For programs and publications on health, contact:

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UT Extension

SP526-H

Osteoporosis: Are You Robbing Your Bones?

A wellness publication written by Barbara P. Clarke, PhD, RD Professor, Personal and Community Health

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE UT
INSTITUTE of AGRICULTURE

You can protect your bone health by learning self-care skills and making lifestyle changes.

Know What Osteoporosis Is

- Bone-weakening disease
- Called the "silent" disease, it steals bone tissue until the bone easily breaks
- A fracture (broken bone) is often the first sign of osteoporosis

Know Your Level of Risk

(✓) Check those that apply to you:

❑ Family history of osteoporosis
❑ Caucasian or Asian woman
❑ Small bones
❑ Body weight less than 127 pounds
❑ Ovaries removed
❑ Early menopause
❑ Postmenopausal
❑ Inactive
❑ Diet low in calcium and vitamin D
❑ Smoke cigarettes and/or drink excessive alcohol
❑ Take medications such as glucocorticoids
❑ Low bone mass or history of a bone fracture after age 50

(✓) Check the health actions you plan to try to lower your risk of osteoporosis:

Strengthen Your Bones

❑ Choose an activity you enjoy.
❑ Start exercising slowly and build up to at least 30 minutes, five or more days per week.
❑ Include bone-strengthening exercises, such as walking, skiing, dancing, stair climbing, step aerobics and strength training.

Adopt a Bone-Healthy Diet

❑ Eat a calcium-rich diet (1,000 to 1,500 mg of calcium per day).
❑ Get enough vitamin D (400-600 IU).
❑ Eat the pyramid way. (www.mypyramid.gov)

Protect Your Bone Health

❑ Don't smoke.
❑ Limit alcoholic drinks.
❑ Use good posture.
❑ Don't get too thin.
❑ Make your home fall-proof.

Know About Medicines that Help or Hurt Your Bones

❑ Hormone replacement therapy is used to both prevent and treat osteoporosis.
❑ Calcitonin stabilizes bone mineral content and slows down bone destroying cells.
❑ Alendronate Sodium (Fosamax®) helps build bone.
❑ Glucocorticoids hurt bones.
❑ Raloxifene (Evista®) is an alternative to hormone replacement therapy and protects bones.
❑ Risedronate (Actonel®) slows bone loss.
❑ Parathyroid hormone (Forteo®) rebuilds bones.
❑ Learn about the benefits, long-term effects and any side effects when considering medications.
❑ If confinement to a house or nursing home limits your exposure to sunlight, consider taking a Vitamin D supplement.
❑ Ask your doctor about the medicines you take and new medicines that help bones.