



Better Living for Texans



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May/June 2014

MAY - Osteoporosis Month

Many of us think of bones are like the steel in an office building — a solid, unchanging framework. Actually, your 206 bones are more like a tree supporting a child's playhouse—supportive, yet alive and needing proper conditions to stay healthy. Contrary to what most think, bone health is more than just getting enough calcium. Calcium is critical, a variety of minerals, vitamins, and other components work together to make strong bones.

— **Calcium** provides 65% of the weight of your bones. Since calcium is vital for nerve and muscle function, your body treats the skeleton like a calcium bank account. Approximately 600 to 700 mg of calcium moves in and out of your bones every day. If your diet is low in calcium, your body removes calcium from your bones, but doesn't replace it. If this occurs consistently over time, the calcium in your bones is seriously depleted. Rich, heart-healthy sources of calcium include skim milk, nonfat yogurt, nonfat ricotta cheese, fortified soymilk, green leafy vegetables, fortified orange juice, and fortified whole grain products.

— **Boron** a trace mineral helps keep calcium from being excreted in urine. The exact amount of boron needed for optimal bone health is not yet known, but a diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables should provide all the boron you need.

— **Magnesium** is used in over 300 enzymes, half of the body's magnesium is found in bones. If calcium supplies are low, magnesium can take the place of some calcium in bone. The suggested intake for magnesium is 350 mg per day (for men) or 280 mg (for women). Nuts and grains are excellent, heart-healthy food sources of magnesium, as are beans, dark green vegetables, fish, and seeds.

— **Vitamin D** goes hand in hand with calcium and bone health. It is a nutrient of concern, according to the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. That means that most people aren't getting enough vitamin D. This vitamin is unusual, in that it can be made from sunshine. The UV - B rays from sunshine penetrate the skin and convert a precursor into vitamin D. Twenty minutes of sun exposure per day provides most of the vitamin D you need — without raising your skin cancer risk. Heart-healthy sources of vitamin D also include salmon, herring, sardines, skim milk, some yogurt, fortified soymilk, and fortified whole grain cereals.

— **Vitamin K** is a fat-soluble vitamin that is found in dark green, leafy vegetables. The Nurses Health Study of over 72,000 women found that women who had the lowest intake of vitamin K had the highest number of hip fractures. Vitamin K is required in order to make bone proteins, and it can help keep calcium from being lost in the urine.

— What's the bottom line for bone health? The best bone-building diet fits right into most guidelines for good nutrition, especially the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate.

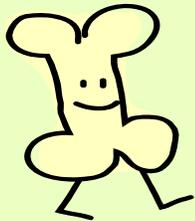
Build your diet around whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, with a few servings of low-fat, calcium-rich foods. Make sure you get enough vitamin D, minimize your salt intake, and try to eat the right amount of protein for your weight.

Exercise, especially walking and jogging, is very beneficial, too.

Source:

www.foodandhealth.com

Agriculture and Natural Resources * Family and Consumer Sciences * 4-H and Youth Development * Community Development Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. The Texas A & M System, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.



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Benefits of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

- ▶ Fruits and vegetables contain essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber that may help protect you from chronic diseases.
- ▶ Substituting fruits and vegetables for higher-calorie foods can be part of a weight loss strategy.
- ▶ Fruits and vegetables are a natural source of energy and give the body many nutrients you need to keep going.



- ▶ Eating fruits and vegetables of different colors gives body a wide range of valuable nutrients, like fiber, folate, potassium and vitamins A and C.

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

June – Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month

Everyone Needs to Eat More Fruits and Vegetables. A growing body of research proves that fruits and vegetables are critical to promoting good health. In fact, fruits and vegetables should be the foundation of a healthy diet. Most people need to double the amount of fruits and vegetables they eat every day.

Fight to Protect Your Health — Fruits and vegetables are packed with essential vitamins, minerals, fiber, and disease-fighting phytochemicals. Because of this, eating plenty of fruits and vegetables everyday can help reduce your risk:

Heart Disease
High Blood Pressure
Type II Diabetes
Certain Cancers

Contain Powerful Phytochemicals (fight-o-chemicals) — Fruits and vegetables have many important phytochemicals that help "fight" to protect your health. Phytochemicals are usually related to color. Fruits and vegetables of different colors — green, yellow-orange, red, blue-purple, and white — contain their own combination of phytochemicals and nutrients that work together to promote good health.

Weight Management — Because they're low in calories and high in fiber, fruits and vegetables can help you control your weight. By eating more fruits and vegetables and fewer high-calorie foods, you'll find it much easier to control your weight.

Energy — Busy lives require food that's nutritious, energizing, and easy to eat on-the-go, like fresh fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables are a natural source of energy and give the body many nutrients you need to keep going.



Source: www.5aday.gov