

# Osteoporosis vs. Healthy Bones

Osteoporosis is a very common problem, affecting one in three women and one in five men over the age of 50. It is a major health risk for nearly 30 million Americans, in large part because many are clueless about how to prevent it.

## Signs and symptoms of loss of bone health

How do we know whether our bones are healthy or not? There are many outward signs and symptoms that may shed light on the health of your bones. Some signs and symptoms that may be indicators of early bone loss:

1. **Receding gums.** Receding gums are quite common and can be attributed to a variety of factors, one of which is bone loss. The standard panoramic x-rays during your visits to the dentist can provide a well-informed dentist with an opportunity to screen you for bone loss.
2. **Decreased grip strength.** In a recent study of postmenopausal women, handgrip strength was the most important physical test factor related to overall bone mineral density.
3. **Weak and brittle fingernails.** Recent science suggests this nail-bone health observation is indeed valid. However, spending time in water, exposed to harsh chemicals, digging in the garden, or other work can be tough on your nails, so take these into consideration as you assess your own nails.
4. **Cramps, muscle aches, and bone pain.** Muscle and bone pain is an often overlooked, but well-documented symptom of severely inadequate vitamin D — an important bone builder. According to experts, vitamin D deficiency has reached alarming proportions. Vitamin D deficiency is neither difficult nor costly to diagnose and correct. Have your own levels checked twice yearly and supplement accordingly. Cramps are another symptom to pay attention to. There can be a number of mechanisms causing leg and foot cramps, but leg cramps that occur at night are often a signal that your calcium, magnesium, and/or potassium blood levels have dropped too low during the night.
5. **Height loss.** Losing height is very common as we age and there are many precursors to it, including poor posture and vertebral fractures.
6. **Body pH.** Want to know if you're losing bone? Try testing your pH. If your first-morning urine pH (after at least 6 hours of sleep without getting up to urinate) is below 6.5, or, if your first-morning saliva pH is below 7.0, your bone alkali mineral reserves are likely being drawn out of your skeleton to buffer metabolic acids. A healthy diet can help you rebuild your bone's alkali mineral reserves and maintain your optimum pH balance without depleting your bone mass. Some may require the taking of enzymes or HCl acid at meals to get the pH to 7.0.
7. **Spinal fractures.** An estimated two-thirds of all spinal fractures happen without us knowing they've occurred — and therefore they go unreported. Keep those muscles in the back strong!
8. **Low overall fitness.** Osteoporosis has been linked to overall decline in physical fitness., as measured by aerobic capacity, muscle strength, and even balance. Even women who have been sedentary their whole lives can make significant gains when they undertake a moderate, self-paced exercise program designed for their needs. And even people in their 80's and 90's have the ability to adapt and respond to both endurance and strength training.

## Risk Factors

Pre-existing conditions such as **asthma, emphysema, Crohn's disease, herniated disks, and autoimmune diseases.** Taking **steroids** such as prednisone or cortisone. **Alcoholism, obesity, smoking, gastrointestinal disorders, sedentary lifestyle and lack of sunlight exposure.**

## Steps to Optimal Bone Health

These simple guidelines can help you maintain, or increase, your bone density safely and naturally, without the use of drugs that might cause you even further harm:

1. Eat a **healthful diet based on your body's metabolism - MPS Profile.** Eating natural, high quality food will naturally increase your bone density and decrease your risk of developing osteoporosis. One food in particular that is worth mentioning are the onion family, which are high in gamma-glutamyl peptides that have been shown to *increase* bone density. Also remember that you need high quality protein like eggs and meats, because amino acids are part of your bone matrix. **Avoid processed foods.**
2. **Calcium** requirements may be found on [Calcium Recommendations](#) page. The best form of calcium is to consume raw dairy products regularly. The body can absorb only 500 mg of Calcium at one time whether through food and/or

supplements. One eight (8) oz. glass of milk contains 275 mg. calcium. Beans, nuts and greens are good sources of calcium. **Calcium supplements** with other nutrients like Vitamin D and K, Boron and Magnesium are recommended.

3. Take **physician grade multiple vitamins** daily. Your body needs many other nutrients to build strong bone tissue such as **magnesium, manganese, zinc, copper, silicon, boron, phosphorus, chromium, potassium, vitamin C and the B-complex vitamins**. Most vitamins are such a low quality that they literally go straight through you with little or no absorption.
4. Almost everyone needs trace minerals, not just calcium, because you simply cannot get all the nutrients you need through food grown in mineral depleted soils. Unprocessed **natural salts** (unprocessed sea salts) are a good source of these ionic trace minerals as well as a physician grade multi vitamin.
5. Optimize your **vitamin D** levels, ideally through proper amounts of sun exposure and/or supplements (8000 IU/day). Vitamin D builds your bone density by helping your body absorb calcium. Lab test for vitamin D should show minimum of 50, 80-100 is even better.
6. Supplement with **vitamin K2** by taking about 150 mcg (menatetrenone) per day, if you are not getting enough from food alone. Fermented foods typically have the highest concentration of vitamin K found in the human diet and can provide several milligrams of vitamin K2 on a daily basis. Additionally, cheese is a good source of vitamin K2.
7. Consume a healthy balance between **omega-3 and omega-6 fats**. Most everyone needs to take a high quality, pharmaceutical fish oil and/or flaxseed oil. Reduce or eliminate the amount of processed vegetable oils you consume, such as corn, canola, safflower, and soy oil. Use only cold or expeller pressed oils.
8. **Exercise**. Studies show that exercise is just as important to your bone health as eating a calcium-rich diet. Strength building exercises like weight training and weight bearing exercises like jogging, stair climbing, jump rope and rowing are especially helpful. Also exercises that increase balance and lower body strength.
9. Consider **bioidentical hormone replacement therapy**, which can increase your bone strength and density by serving as a growth promoter for the osteoblasts (the cells that build bone). Bioidentical HRT ideally should be applied as a trans mucosal cream, applied in the vaginal labia area, rectum or skin. They should not be swallowed.
10. **Avoid sugars** particularly high fructose corn syrup.
11. **Avoid soda and all carbonated beverages** because of the phosphates which increase bone damage by depleting your bones of calcium.
12. Maintain a **body pH of neutral to basic**. Check yourself with litmus paper found at health food stores.
13. Take **probiotics, digestive enzymes** and/or **Hydrochlorid Acid** with meals. These help the absorption of all vitamins and minerals.
14. **Manage stress**. Stress, negative emotions, and depression figure prominently in the deterioration of bone health through the effects that stress hormones (such as cortisol and adrenaline) have on bone metabolism. So find ways to remove some of the emotional stressors from your life and invite in more relaxation, appreciation, and enjoyment.
15. **Avoid gluten**, a grain protein that has been shown to decrease bone density. Gluten is found in wheat, barley, rye and spelt.
16. **Avoid steroids**, especially if you have asthma or any other autoimmune disease, as they increase your risk for osteoporosis. Also **avoid diuretics, antacids and anitconvulsants**.
17. **Avoid Smoking** and excessive use of **Alcohol**. For alcohol, moderate intake is one drink/day for women and men over 65 and two drinks/day for men under 65.