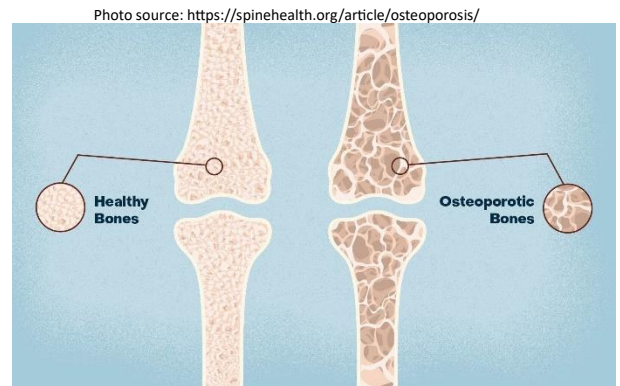


## Nutrition Newsletter: Bone Health & Osteoporosis

May is National Osteoporosis Awareness & Prevention Month. Osteoporosis is a condition characterized by thin and brittle bones, which can result in weakness, breaks, and fractures. The risk of developing osteoporosis increases with age; however, there are steps we can take to strengthen & maintain bones. A balanced diet and regular exercise are important for bone health. Let's explore some strategies to promote bone health as we age.



### Diet & Nutrition

**Calcium:** About 40% of our bone mineral density comes from calcium. Calcium is found in many foods such as dairy, fortified foods, soymilk, tofu, beans, nuts, canned sardines and salmon, and many green vegetables including okra, kale and broccoli. Older adults should aim for 1200mg of calcium per day.

**Vitamin D:** Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that is needed for calcium absorption. Vitamin D is mostly found in fortified foods like dairy products and cereal. We can also get Vitamin D from the sun; however, too much sun exposure can be harmful. For many people, a Vitamin D supplement may be the best way to get enough Vitamin D.

**Protein:** Protein is a macronutrient that provides structure to skin, muscles, and even bones! It is recommended to choose protein sources that are lower in saturated fat and sodium. Fish, poultry, eggs, low-fat yogurt, lentils, tofu, chickpeas, nuts & seeds are all good lean protein sources.

### Exercise & Physical Activity

**Weight-bearing Exercise:** For bone health it is beneficial to focus on weight-bearing exercise which can help strengthen bones. Low-impact weight-bearing exercises can be great for beginners & those looking to get back into an exercise routine. These include walking, stair climbing, water aerobics, and chair yoga.

**Muscle-strengthening Exercise:** Exercises that promote muscle growth are also important for bone health. When our muscles are strong our bones become stronger too! Beginner exercises that help strengthen muscles include resistance band training, chair exercises, and light dumbbell workouts.

Before starting a new supplement, exercise routine, or diet it's important to talk with your doctor, dietitian, and healthcare team to see if it's appropriate for you.

Written by Hannah Clayton, Registered Dietitian