



## Bone Health for Women

### Did You Know?

While bone fractures are common in the United States, you can decrease your risk by being physically active!

Maintaining bone health is very important, since bone density gradually decreases with age. Bone health starts at a young age by developing healthy habits, such as being physically active. Women are more likely to develop osteoporosis due to their smaller bones and due to the hormone estrogen. However, there are exercises you can do to increase your bone health.

Being physically active helps to promote bone health and also helps to reduce the risk of falling, by increasing balance and muscle strength. In order to promote bone health, it is important to accumulate at least 30 minutes of weight-bearing activity on most days each week. To prevent boredom, try different activities. For instance, go for a walk 2 times during the week, jump rope 1 day during the week, and play tennis on 2 days during the week.

Listed below are examples and types of exercises you can perform in order to strengthen your bones and to promote bone health.

**Weight-Bearing Exercises-** Weight-bearing activities include walking, running, dancing, playing tennis, climbing the stairs, and jumping rope, among other similar activities. All of these involve placing a force on your muscles and bones, in order to make them stronger.

**Strength-Training Exercise/Resistance Exercises-** These type of activities include weight lifting with free weights or weight machines, doing bodyweight exercises such as lunges or pushups, and performing resistance band exercises. These types of exercises should be done 2-3 times per week, on non-consecutive days.

**Balance Exercises-** Performing balance exercises can help to strengthen muscles and bones, while also decreasing the risk of falls. There are various types of balance exercises, including yoga and other simple exercises such as standing on one leg for 10-30 seconds and then switching to the other leg. Try closing your eyes during this balancing exercise for an added challenge.

The best exercises for maintaining bone health involve your body working against gravity. Two examples are hiking and climbing stairs. Consider starting a walking group with a couple of friends; this will make it more fun and allow you to socialize!

