



Bone Health for Older Adults

Did You Know?

While bone fractures among older adults 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. However, there are exercises that you can do as an older adult in order to promote bone health and to slow this loss of bone density.

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, which involves 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 doing bodyweight exercises such as lunges or pushups, and performing resistance band exercises. There are also beneficial exercises that can be done while sitting in a chair. These types of exercises should be done 2-3 times per week, on non-consecutive days.

Balance Exercises- Falls are a common cause of fractures among older adults, and performing balance exercises can help to lower the risk of falling and decrease the risk of bone fractures. 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. If an exercise causes you pain, make sure to consult your healthcare provider before resuming the activity.

