



Exercise to Bolster your Bones

Osteoporosis, a bone disease which affects both men and women of almost any age, is most common in post-menopausal women. Exercises that build new bone are important in helping to prevent fractures, which are quite common in those with osteoporosis. Check out the following facts about exercising to boost your bone strength:

- Weight bearing exercise helps keep bones strong by causing the muscles and tendons to pull on the bones. This stimulates bone cells to produce more bone. Those with and without osteoporosis need to engage in weight-bearing exercise.
- How do you do weight bearing exercise? It can be done using your own bodyweight, as in jogging or doing pushups, or by lifting external weights like dumbbells or barbells. It is recommended that you consult with an exercise professional before you begin a weight lifting regime to ensure that you are lifting with proper form.
- High impact exercise is one of the most effective ways to build new bone and prevent osteoporosis. This entails imparting a jolt to the muscle and bone like you do during running, jumping, or vigorous weight lifting. If you already have osteoporosis, it may not be safe to engage in high impact activities. Please consult with your doctor first.
- In those with osteoporosis, balance exercises are essential for fall and fracture prevention. Even if bone loss is not yet a problem, working on your balance now can guard against a natural, age-related decline in balance. Here's an effective balance exercise you can do at home:

With your right hand holding a chair for support, lift your left leg 20 times. Repeat on the other side. The next day, do the same exercise, but only hold the chair with four fingers. Eventually, you'll be using only one finger, and then no fingers at all!

If you would like health programs offered at your workplace, church or community center, please contact CHOICES Health Education and Wellness Program at (352)-334-8889 or e-mail CHOICEShewprogram@doh.state.fl.us
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