

How can I keep my bones strong as I age?

4 ways to keep your bones healthy

“I’ve fallen, and I can’t get up.” That was the catchphrase from an old-school television

commercial featuring an older woman who had fallen to the floor.



The commercial became a pop-culture phenomenon and was spoofed in movies, television shows and comedy routines.

But falling and breaking a bone is no laughing matter.

Approximately 1 in 2 women and up to 1 in 4 men age 50 and older will break a bone due to osteoporosis.¹

And because bone loss usually does not hurt, a broken bone may be the first sign of the disease.

 **The good news:** Regular exercise, bone-supporting foods and healthy lifestyle habits can help keep your



Bone density tends to decline with age, increasing the risk of a fracture. Fortunately, regular exercise, smart food choices and other healthy habits can help maintain bone density and protect your bones.



bones strong as you age and lower your risk for fractures.



Weight-bearing exercise and strength training help maintain bone density and slow bone loss.

These approaches protect bones in different ways.

Moving against gravity loads them, while strength exercises create resistance as your muscles pull against them.

Try activities such as:

- Brisk walking, jogging or

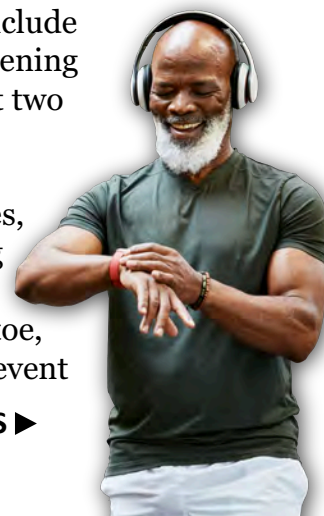
climbing stairs

- Dancing, hiking or playing tennis
- Lifting weights or using resistance bands
- Squats, lunges, push-ups and other body-weight exercises

Adults should include muscle-strengthening activities at least two days a week.²

Balance exercises, such as standing on one leg or walking heel to toe, can also help prevent falls.

BONES ►



► BONES



Your bones need several nutrients to stay strong:

Calcium: Most adults need 1,000 milligrams a day. Women ages 51 to 70 and all adults over 70 need 1,200 milligrams.³

Good sources include dairy products, fortified plant milks, tofu, canned salmon with bones and leafy green vegetables.

Vitamin D: This vitamin helps your body absorb calcium. You can get it from fatty fish, egg yolks and fortified foods.

Protein: Protein helps form the framework of your bones. Good sources include eggs, fish, poultry, dairy products, beans, lentils, nuts and tofu.

Talk with your doctor before taking calcium or vitamin D supplements. Taking more than you need does not provide additional protection



and may cause health problems or interact with certain medications.



Some lifestyle habits, medications and health conditions can accelerate bone loss:

Smoking can interfere with bone-building cells and reduce how well your body absorbs calcium.

Heavy alcohol use can contribute to bone loss and increase the risk of falling.

Certain medications, including long-term use of corticosteroids such as prednisone, may weaken bones.

Don't stop taking a prescribed medication. Ask your doctor how it may affect your bones and if additional steps are needed to protect them.



Ask your doctor about your bone health if you have a family history of osteoporosis, have broken a bone after age 50 or have experienced significant height loss.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends:

- Osteoporosis screening for women 65 and older.
- Screening is also recommended for postmenopausal women younger than 65 who have an increased risk for osteoporosis.⁴

You can't control every risk factor that affects bone health. But regular exercise, nutritious foods, healthy lifestyle choices and appropriate screening can help keep your bones strong and support an active, independent life.

References

1. May, C. (2026). Building Better Bones Together: Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month 2026. Bone Health & Osteoporosis Foundation. From: <https://tinyurl.com/mr435p2d>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2025). Adding Physical Activity as an Adult. From: <https://tinyurl.com/2az7nhs6>
3. National Institutes of Health Office of Dietary Supplements. (2023). Calcium: Fact sheet for consumers. From: <https://tinyurl.com/mr65yp2s>
4. U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. (2025). Osteoporosis to Prevent Fractures: Screening. From: <https://tinyurl.com/35ts2e8z>