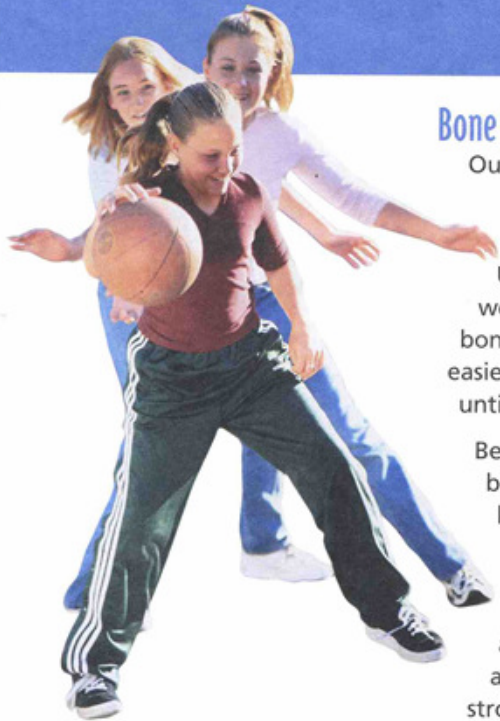


# Bone Up on Bone Loss! Exercise to Build Healthy Bones!



## Bone Health is Important

Our bones give us the freedom to do the things we want to do. They help us to stand up straight, to run, to jump, and to play. That's why it is important for our bones to stay strong and healthy our whole lives long.

Unfortunately, many older people have bones that are weak and break easily. Osteoporosis is a condition in which bones are fragile, making them fracture or break much easier. Osteoporosis usually doesn't show up in our bones until we are adults, but can start when we are young.

Between the ages 10 to 18 is when you make the bone that must last a lifetime – this bone is known as peak bone mass. To reach the best possible peak bone mass means getting enough exercise and calcium. Bones are like a bank account – if you deposit lots of exercise and calcium now, when you are young, you will have strong bones for later in life.



## How Exercise Helps Bones

One important way to help keep your bones healthy for your entire life is through exercise. Exercise is the way you tell bones that they need to be strong. Just like exercising your muscles can make them grow bigger, exercising your bones makes them work harder, which helps them to build up bone mass. And building bone mass as a child or teenager is especially important because this is when our bones are growing the most.



Here are some good exercises for building strong and healthy bones:

- Walking
  - Jogging
  - Climbing stairs
  - Hiking
  - Aerobic dancing
  - Racquet sports
  - Dancing
  - Cross country skiing
- Jumping and running sports are also great exercises for bone health. Sports like basketball, volleyball, soccer, field hockey, and softball are other good ways to build strong bones too.

## Good Exercises for Healthy Bones

"Weight-bearing" exercise is one of the most important things kids can do right now to build bone mass and reduce the risk for osteoporosis later. Weight-bearing exercises make your bones and muscles work. For exercises, like jogging or jumping rope, your feet and legs are carrying your body weight. Regular weight-bearing exercise can help people reach the best possible peak bone mass when they are young, and help keep that bone strength throughout life.

However, some activities like swimming do not involve weight-bearing benefits. But, they build strong muscles which also helps to build strong bones.

In fact, the 1996 Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health recommends that everyone over age two should participate in at least **30 minutes of moderate physical activity, on most preferably, each day of the week.** To keep your bones growing strong, gradually begin to exercise with more intensity and for longer periods of time.

## Other Important Things for Healthy Bones

Our bodies continually remove and replace small amounts of calcium from our bones. If your body removes more calcium than it replaces, your bones will become weaker and have a greater chance of breaking.

In addition to proper exercise, other things like calcium are important for building strong and healthy bones. When we get enough calcium from the foods we eat and drink, our bodies don't have to take the calcium from our bones. Kids should start now to store plenty of calcium in their bones for later in life.

Milk and other dairy foods, such as cheese and yogurt, are excellent sources of calcium. One 8-ounce glass of milk has about 300 milligrams (mg) of calcium. Children and teens need about 1300 mg of calcium a day. Kids also can get calcium from alternative sources such as foods rich in calcium or supplements. Check the nutrition label on foods you buy to choose foods high in calcium and low in fat and calories.



### How Much Calcium Do Kids Need Each Day?

Age	Milligrams
1-3 years	500 mg
4-8 years	800 mg
9-18 years	1,300 mg



Hockey and softball are some good ways to build strong bones.



### Some Foods High in Calcium

- Yogurt, 1 cup - 400 mg
- Cheddar cheese, 1 1/2 ounces - 300 mg
- Milk, 1 cup - 300 mg
- Orange juice with added calcium, 1 cup - 300 mg
- Tofu made with calcium, 1/2 cup - 260 mg
- Broccoli, 1 cup - 118 mg
- Dry roasted almonds, 1/4 cup - 100 mg
- Corn tortillas, 3 tortillas - 80 mg

Vitamin D is also important for bone health because it helps your body to absorb more calcium. Milk and some other foods have vitamin D added. Also, sunlight is important for activating vitamin D.

## Make a Commitment to Last a Lifetime

Healthy bones are important for a healthy body. Getting enough physical activity is the way to make your bones grow strong. Whether it's as part of a gym class, an after school sport, or just playing with friends, being active is a key to strong bones. And getting enough calcium when you are younger helps your bones to stay strong and healthy. Don't forget, what you do for your bones now can have a big impact on what your bones do for you later in life.



American Academy  
of Orthopaedic  
Surgeons  
(800) 824-BONES  
[www.aaos.org](http://www.aaos.org)



National Institute of  
Child Health and  
Human Development  
(800) 370-2943  
[www.nichd.nih.gov](http://www.nichd.nih.gov)