



MAKE YOUR BONES STRONG WITH DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular exercise is one of the best natural defenses against osteoporosis!

You can reduce your risk of osteoporosis and bone fractures with daily physical activity. If you have osteoporosis, follow the activity program set up by your health care provider or physical therapist.

A regular exercise program of the right kind helps:

- Keep your bones strong by promoting new bone formation
- Increase strength around joints most vulnerable to fracture such as hips, spine, and wrists
- Improve balance for fall prevention
- Maintain good posture to prevent spinal compression fractures

What kinds of exercise should I include?

- Weight-bearing cardiovascular exercise
- Strength training or resistance exercise
- Balance training
- Posture and trunk extension exercises

Weight-bearing cardiovascular exercise can keep your bones strong and less brittle. The impact of the foot landing on the ground positively affects bone density. Good examples of weight-bearing cardiovascular exercise include:

- Walking
- Jogging
- Stair climbing
- Aerobics
- Tennis
- Dancing
- Cross-country skiing
- Jumping rope

All cardiovascular exercises are good for heart health. However, some are not weight-bearing or high-impact enough to keep your bones healthy – for example, swimming, bicycling, rowing machines, and cross-country machines.

➔ Do weight-bearing cardiovascular exercises 30 to 40 minutes, 3 to 4 times per week.

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Strength training or resistance exercise can maintain or sometimes increase bone density. Strength training also increases muscle strength. It improves your ability to climb stairs more easily, walk faster, lift, and look better. Strength training can be done with:

- Machines
 - Free weights
 - Calisthenics
 - Exercise bands (stretch tubing)
- Do strength training 2 to 3 times per week.
- Do 2 to 3 sets of 8 to 15 repetitions.



Balance training is important for fall prevention: Do exercises that promote balance such as:

- One-legged stand
 - Heel-toe walking
 - Tai Chi
 - Dance
- Do balance training 2 to 7 times per week.

Posture and trunk extension exercises improve posture and prevent compression fractures. They also develop the trunk strength needed for proper body mechanics to prevent compression fractures. Body mechanics are important in activities from vacuuming to heavy lifting. An example of trunk extension exercise is:

- Shoulder-blade pinches
 - Machines for back extension
 - Lat pull-downs
- Do posture and extension activities daily.

What else should I know about exercise?

- Maintain proper trunk alignment at all times. Keep your ears over your shoulders and your shoulders over your hips.
- Don't just exercise one part of your body; training effects are site-specific.
- If your joints can not take the stress, avoid high impact activities.
- If you have osteoporosis:
 - Avoid calisthenics that curve the spine forward – for example, sit-ups and toe-touches.
 - Avoid exercise machines that involve trunk rotation or forward bending such as abdominal exercise machines, rowing machines, or stationary bikes with moving handlebars.

Remember, the positive benefits of exercise will only last as long as you keep exercising!