



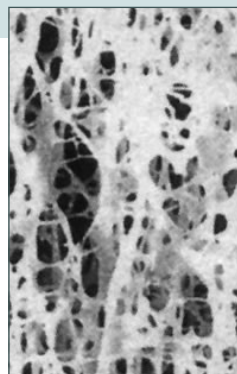
# Preventing Future Fractures

You've seen your health care provider and the diagnosis is official — you fractured a bone. A broken bone, which is the same thing as a fracture, can be very painful and traumatic. Even if your fracture occurred in an accident or fall that seemed like an isolated event, it may still indicate a problem with your bone health.

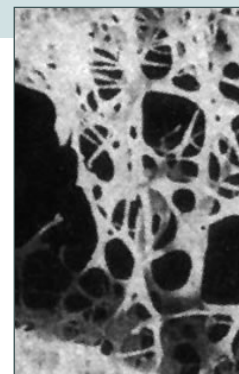
## The Connection to Bone Disease/Osteoporosis

Many people are unaware of the link between fractures and osteoporosis. If you are over age 50, there is a very good chance that your fracture is related to osteoporosis sometimes called "brittle bone". Osteoporosis — also known as porous bone, bone that is full of holes — is a disease characterized by low bone mass, which makes bones more likely to break.

Fortunately, there is a lot you can do to prevent fractures. It's a matter of taking advantage of proper diet, exercise, medications and other resources available to you right now. Below are a few things you can do to get started.



Healthy Bone



Weakened Bone

Weak bone is more porous than strong bone. It's easy to see the difference in these illustrations, but people usually do not feel the difference at all.

**Osteoporosis is a silent disease — until a fracture occurs.**

## 7 Smart Steps to Better Bone Health

### 1. Talk with Your Health Care Provider

Discuss your fracture. Ask your health care provider if your break may be related to osteoporosis. **Seek advice about bone mineral density (BMD) testing (often referred to as a DXA scan).** It's the best way to detect low bone density, and its most extreme form, osteoporosis.

Also discuss medications that have been proven effective at minimizing bone loss and/or reducing the risk of future fractures. A number of medications have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of osteoporosis.

### 2. Get Adequate Calcium

Everyone needs calcium to maintain strong, healthy bones and muscles. **The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommends that after age 50, adult men and women increase their calcium intake to 1,000 and 1,200 milligrams per day, respectively.** If you are not getting enough calcium, you may be able to increase your calcium intake by adding some calcium-rich foods like milk, cheese, broccoli or almonds. If you do not get enough calcium through your diet and multivitamins, calcium supplements will also work.





### 3. Get Adequate Vitamin D

Vitamin D, the “sunshine vitamin,” plays a critical role in helping your body absorb calcium from your digestive system into your bloodstream. **The Bone Health and Osteoporosis Foundation recommends 800-1,000 International Units (IU) of vitamin D per day.**

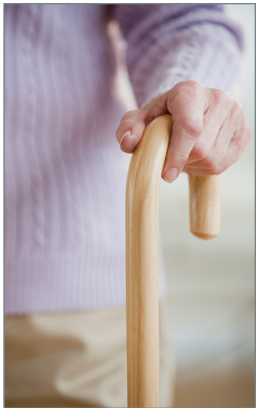
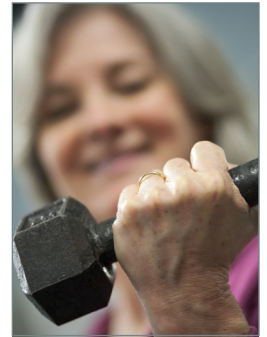
Sunshine and vitamin-D fortified foods, like milk, can help you meet your daily quota. Vitamin D supplements are also available and frequently necessary. You can discuss with your healthcare provider which options are best for you.

### 4. Get Ample Exercise

Exercise is one of the best ways to preserve bone density and maintain muscle strength.

**To build and maintain bone density, do weight-bearing and resistance exercises, which make your body move against gravity.**

Some examples of weight-bearing exercises include: dancing, walking, and using a stationary bike. Resistance exercises to consider include: limited weight lifting, using exercise bands, or rising up and down on your toes to strengthen your bones and maintain muscle strength.



### 5. Prevent Falls

**You can reduce your chances of falling and causing a fracture by playing it safe wherever you are.**

Outside your home:

- Wear shoes that offer good traction.
- Be careful about floors that can be slippery.
- Check out curbs before stepping up or down.
- In bad weather, use a cane or walker if you feel unstable.

Inside your home:

- Use nightlights.
- Keep floors clear of clutter.
- Don't walk around in socks or floppy slippers.
- Keep electrical cords out of the way.
- Use a rubber mat in the shower or tub.

You can also reduce falls by performing activities that boost your balance, flexibility, and strength. Balance is the ability to keep your body stable while moving or standing still. Activities like tai chi, swimming, and stretching exercises can help.

### 6. Don't Smoke

Tobacco is toxic to your bones, making you more at risk for low bone mass and osteoporosis. **Don't smoke.** Though that's easier to say than do, investigate programs, medications, and other stop-smoking methods that offer help.

### 7. Limit Alcohol Intake

Controlling your alcohol intake can connect you to healthier bones. Drinking heavily can increase bone loss and the risk of sustaining a fragility fracture from a fall. **According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Dietary Guidelines for Americans, drinking in moderation (up to one drink per day for women, and two drinks per day for men) can help protect you from bone loss and the risk of sustaining a fragility fracture from a fall.**

**Want More Information?** Visit the National Institutes of Health at [www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/bone-health](http://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/bone-health)

*The information contained above is not intended to be medical advice. In all cases, The American Orthopaedic Association recommends that you consult your own physician regarding any course of treatment or medication.*