



Cedar Valley Bone Health Institute
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Introduction to Bone Health

Your Bone Health depends on many factors. Some you can control and others are genetic. You can inherit from your parent's tendencies for robust or marginal bones. These tendencies can be modified by your diet and exercise. A brief summary follows.

Calcium is the mineral in your bones which makes them rigid and strong. You must take in enough Calcium to support solid bones. Your body also uses Calcium for nerve and heart muscle function. If you do not have enough Calcium in your blood, Calcium is taken out of your bones to keep you alive. You need **1200 to 1500 mg of Calcium daily**. This should be taken divided among 3 meals to maximize absorption. Milk has 300 mg in each 8 oz glass. If you do not consume 4 or 5 glasses of milk daily, or 8 oz portions of yogurt or cottage cheese, you probably need to take Calcium tablets with your meals.

Vitamin D is essential for Calcium absorption from your gut. Vitamin D is essential for Calcium deposition in your bones. Our skin can make Vitamin D when exposed to strong sunlight. Sun block prevents this. Even if you spend time in the mid-day sun without sun block and with little clothing on, in Iowa this only works April through September. You need a **minimum of 800 to 1000 units of Vitamin D daily**. More is needed to catch up from previous deficits. Multivitamins with "100%" of daily allowance have only 400 units – the FDA standard from the 1920's. **Vitamin D3** is available in 1000 unit tablets for less than 4 cents each.

Standing exercise for at least 20 minutes daily is essential to maintain your ability to stand and walk. During childhood and teen years you build your bones to their maximum size and strength. One hour daily 3-5 days a week of running and sports will build the best bone you can for the rest of your life.

Avoid smoking!! Smoking is the most significant avoidable risk factor for Osteoporosis.

You have Osteoporosis if:

- You are 1 ½ inches shorter than you were in high school.
- You have developed a hunched back and cannot stand up straight.
- You have back pain due to compression fracture of the spine.
- You have broken a wrist, hip or other bone falling from a standing height.

Test for Bone Density with a DXA Scan. Most insurance will cover this for women over 50 or persons with risk factors such as height loss, or fragility fractures. Reading a DXA scan takes specialized training. The International Society for Clinical Densitometry trains, tests and certifies individuals as competent to read the DXA scans at current standards. Each radiology tech should be trained and her accuracy in positioning the patients calibrated.

Cedar Valley Bone Health Institute is the only facility in our area, and one of the few in Iowa with Certified Clinical Densitometrists reading DXA Scans. We are also the only facility which has Calibrated our Technologists.

Various medications are used to treat Osteoporosis. Finding the right medication for you often requires at least 30 minutes dealing only with osteoporosis. **At Cedar Valley Bone Health Institute we offer a 30 minute DXA Scan and a 30 minute Consultation directly following the scan.** Ask your doctor for a referral.

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