Looking After Your Bones

As we get older, our bones can become more brittle. This is known as osteoporosis. If you have osteoporosis, your bones can break more easily. It is important to have enough calcium and vitamin D to support your bone health. To help keep your bones healthy, try the following tips:

**Eat four serves of calcium-rich food every day**

One serve is:

* a cup of milk (250 millilitres) or a tub of yoghurt or custard (200 grams)
* two slices of cheese (40 grams)
* half a cup of tinned fish with edible bones, like salmon or sardines.

**Be physically active**

If you have osteoporosis, it is safer to do low impact exercises such as climbing stairs or Tai chi. Avoid activities that involve quick movements or twisting, this will help reduce your risk of fracture.

Strength training is also important, but if you have osteoporosis then you should only lift a moderate amount of weight. Avoid activities that involve lifting heavy weights and lifting things overhead.

**Spend some time in the sunshine**

Vitamin D is important to help absorb calcium. The best source of Vitamin D is from the sun. In summer, get outside in the sunshine for about 10 to 15 minutes before 11am or after 3pm on most days. In winter in Tasmania the sun isn’t as strong, so try to spend at least 30 minutes in the sun in the middle of the day from mid-April to mid-September.

**Supplements**

If it is not possible for you to get all of the calcium and Vitamin D you need from food and sunshine, you may need to take a supplement. It is best to talk to your doctor and pharmacist about when and how to take supplements.

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