

Seniors and Osteoporosis

Understanding the Basics

Osteoporosis is a bone-thinning disease that can lead to serious injuries such as bone fractures.¹ The leading cause of Osteoporosis is a decrease in the hormones estrogen and androgen that comes with aging.² The U.S. Surgeon General recommends a healthy diet high in calcium and vitamin D to protect bones from becoming too thin and breaking.¹

At Premier Homecare of Indiana, we care about the health and safety of you and your loved ones. We also understand the confusion and concerns that can come along with beginning a new diet. Using this list of frequently asked questions can help assist in the everyday management of a diet high in calcium and vitamin D.

1. What factors increase the risk of Osteoporosis?	✓ Many factors increase the risk of Osteoporosis in both men and women of all ages, including advanced age, lifestyle choices, certain diseases, and even medications. Some additional risk factors include: race and gender, bone structure and body weight, smoking cigarettes, excessive use of alcohol, low lifetime calcium intake, deficiency in vitamin D, an inactive lifestyle, excessive intake of protein, sodium, and caffeine, abnormal absence of menstrual periods, certain medications for long-term chronic diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, thyroid problems, and seizures, and a family history of Osteoporosis.
2. What are the symptoms of Osteoporosis?	✓ No specific symptoms have been found for Osteoporosis. Doctors consider this to be a “silent” disease of bone mass loss. Some patients do report back pain or frequent bone fractures.
3. Can you prevent Osteoporosis?	✓ There are many steps you can take to keep your bones healthy. The U.S. Surgeon General recommends a “three-pronged approach” to protect bones from becoming too thin and breaking. The first prong is regular physical activity. At least 30 minutes of physical activity a day, including strength training with weights, will improve strength and balance which can help prevent falls in the future. The second prong is regular checkups and screenings. Women should begin regular screenings along with bone density tests at the beginning of menopause since it causes the body to start losing large amounts of calcium, leading to bone mass loss. Maintaining a regular checkup schedule with your doctor may help to catch any signs of

	osteoporosis early. The third prong the U.S. Surgeon General recommends is a healthy diet of foods rich in vitamin D and calcium to help prevent the development of Osteoporosis.	
4. What is calcium, and how does it affect Osteoporosis?	✓ Calcium is the major component of bones and is critical to maintain bone density. Some foods that include calcium are milk, yogurt, cheese, tofu, salmon, sardines, turnips, spinach, kale, and broccoli.	
5. What is vitamin D and how does it affect Osteoporosis?	✓ Vitamin D works in the kidneys to absorb calcium that would otherwise be lost. Foods that are rich in vitamin D are salmon, halibut, tuna, fortified milk, egg yolks, liver, and fish oils.	
6. What is a Percent Daily Value (%DV)?	✓ A Percent Daily Value (%DV) is a percentage based on the recommended daily intakes for each type of food or nutrient. When listed on a food label, the Percent Daily Value tells you how much that one serving of food provides as a percentage of established standards. Using Percent Daily Values helps you determine what foods are higher in nutrients compared to other similar foods.	
7. What are the recommended daily intakes for calcium and vitamin D?	✓ The recommended daily intakes for calcium and vitamin D change throughout the aging process. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences provides recommendations for each age group based on Adequate Intake (AI) values of calcium and vitamin D for the general population.	
What are the recommended daily intakes for calcium and vitamin D?		
	51-70 years old	71 and older
Calcium AI Value	1,200 mg (120%DV)	1,200 mg (120% DV)
Vitamin D AI Value	400 IU (100% DV)	600 IU (150% DV)
8. How is Osteoporosis treated?	✓ Osteoporosis is treated by combining the tools of prevention, regular weight bearing exercise, and a healthy diet high in vitamin D and calcium, with certain medications approved by the FDA. Some of these medications include, Fosomax, Actonel, and Boniva.	
Healthy Food Choices		
As we age, changes in our environment and physical abilities can contribute to unique osteoporosis management issues. Without proper nutrition, the risk of serious injuries increases. Use the list below to find examples of foods to eat and foods to avoid when trying to decrease the risks associated with osteoporosis.		

Foods to Eat	Foods to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Foods that are rich in calcium:3 Milk, cheese, yogurt (regular and frozen), turnips, tofu, salmon, sardines, spinach, kale, broccoli, orange juice fortified with calcium, leafy vegetables ✓ Foods that are high in vitamin D:3 Salmon, halibut, tuna, fortified milk, egg yolks, liver, fish oils, soybeans ✓ Sunlight is also a good source of vitamin D. Most people need about 1,000 to 2,000 IU a day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Limit intake of foods high in sodium, (salt).5 ✓ Popular sods or soft drinks that contain phosphoric acid.5 ✓ Caffeinated beverages such as hot coffee and sodas.5 ✓ Stop smoking and drinking alcohol.

This information is not meant as a substitute for professional medical or nutritional advice and consultation. When differences exist between the information here and information given to you by your healthcare provider(s), you should follow the advice of your healthcare provider(s). Any additional information or clarification needed should be sought from the Physician, Practitioner, Speech Pathologist, or Nutritionist who is familiar with the individual's health and medical conditions.

1 Shreyasee Amin, MD. OSTEOPOROSIS. June 2006. American College of Rheumatology. 18 March 2009.

[http://www.rheumatology.org/public/factsheets/diseases_and_conditions/osteoporosis.asp]

2AARP.org. Boning Up on Osteoporosis. 18 Feb.

2009.[http://www.aarp.org/health/staying_healthy/prevention/a2004-12-21-osteoporosis.html]

3HelpGuide.org. Preventing and Healing Osteoporosis. 11 Feb. 2009.

[http://www.helpguide.org/life/healthy_diet_osteoporosis.htm]

4MayoClinic.com. Percent Daily Value: What does it mean? 6 May 2008. 18 March 2009.

[<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/food-and-nutrition/AN00284>]

5“Osteoporosis Diet Dangers: Foods to Avoid”. WebMD. 11 March 2009.

[<http://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/living-with-osteoporosis-7/dietdangers?page=2>]

6“Osteoporosis Lifestyle and Prevention”. The Hormone Foundation. 11 March 2009.

[<http://www.hormone.org/Osteoporosis/lifestyle.cfm>]

8 “Fiber in Your Diet” Healthgoods.com 4 March 2009

[http://www.healthgoods.com/Education/Nutrition_Information/General_Nutrition/fiber_in_diet.htm]

9 “Nutritional Guidelines for Senior Citizens”. Seniors-Site. 11 March 2009. [<http://www.seniors-site.com/nutritio/guides.html>]