

Creating Health & Nutrition

Are You at Risk for Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a disease in which the bones become weak and are more likely to break. People with osteoporosis most often break bones in the hip, spine, and wrist.

Who Gets Osteoporosis?

More than 53 million people either already have osteoporosis or are at risk due to low bone mass.

Osteoporosis can strike at any age, but it is most common in older women. One out of every two women and one in four men over age 50 will break a bone in their lifetime due to osteoporosis.

What Causes Osteoporosis?

Many risk factors can lead to bone loss and osteoporosis. Some of these risk factors you cannot change, while others you can.

Risk Factors You Cannot Change

Sex: women develop osteoporosis more often than men.

Age: the older you are, the greater your risk for osteoporosis.

Frame size: small, thin women with small bone structure are at greater risk.

Ethnicity: white and Asian women are at highest risk; black and Hispanic women have a lower risk.

Family history: osteoporosis tends to run in families; if a family member has osteoporosis or a history of broken bones, there is a greater chance you might develop it, too.

Risk Factors You Can Change

Hormone status: low estrogen levels due to menopause or missing menstrual periods can cause osteoporosis in women; low testosterone levels can bring on osteoporosis in men.

Nutrition: a diet low in calcium and vitamin D makes you more prone to bone loss.

Medication use: some medicines increase the risk of osteoporosis.

Activity level: lack of exercise or long-term bedrest can weaken bones.

Alcohol intake: more than 2 to 3 ounces of alcohol a day can cause bone loss that can lead to broken bones.

Smoking: cigarettes weaken bones.

Anorexia nervosa: this eating disorder can lead to osteoporosis.

How Can I Reduce My Risk?

There are many steps you can take to keep your bones healthy. To keep your bones strong and slow down bone loss, eat a healthy diet that includes calcium and vitamin D. Do regular

weight-bearing exercise to help maintain and increase bone strength. Do not drink alcohol in excess or smoke. Lastly, talk to your health care provider about the medications you are taking. Some medications are prescribed to prevent and treat osteoporosis. On the other hand, some medications used for other purposes may result in bone loss.

To help reduce your risk of osteoporosis, consider increasing your intake of the following foods:

- Fat-free or low-fat dairy products
- Canned beans such as navy, great northern, and pinto
- Calcium-fortified products such as orange juice, cereal, soy beverage, and tofu
- Canned fish with bones, such as sardines and salmon
- Soy products such as tofu
- Dark green leafy vegetables such as broccoli, bok choy, collards, and spinach



Examine Your Risks

My risks	What I do now	What I would like to change	How I plan to change
Lack of exercise	Don't make time	Be more active	Take the stairs rather than the elevator

Try the following to boost calcium content in your meals and snacks:

- Add fat-free or low-fat shredded cheese to an English muffin, bagel, or toast.
- Drink fat-free or low-fat milk instead of soda or other beverages at meals.
- Enjoy a glass of fat-free or low-fat milk or hot chocolate for a snack.
- Add broccoli or beans to salads.
- Add nonfat dry milk to recipes (meatballs, meatloaf, creamed soups).
- Choose fat-free or low-fat yogurt for breakfast or as a snack.

Whole-Wheat Pasta with Beans and Greens

Serving size: 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup servings (15% DV calcium)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (16-ounce) package whole-wheat pasta
- 2 medium onions
- 1 medium carrot
- 3 large cloves garlic
- 2 pounds (1 large bunch) spinach, kale, or swiss chard
- 2 (15½-ounce) cans great northern, cannellini, or lima beans
- 2 Tablespoons canola oil
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook pasta following package directions. Drain, reserving 1 cup pasta water. Set aside.
2. While pasta is cooking, rinse, peel, and dice onions and carrot. Peel and mince garlic.
3. Rinse greens, more than once if needed, to remove all grit. Remove tough stems. Chop coarsely.
4. In a colander, drain and rinse beans.
5. In a large skillet over medium-low heat, heat oil. Add garlic, carrot, onion, and greens. Cook until onions are soft.
6. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup reserved pasta water and seasonings. Cook until greens are tender.
7. Add beans to greens. If needed, add a little more reserved pasta water to make a sauce.
8. Add cooked pasta to beans and greens. Toss to combine. Cook until pasta is heated through, about 5 more minutes.

Recipe adapted from *Cooking Matters*.

Source

National Institutes of Health, Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases National Resource Center, "Osteoporosis Overview," www.niams.nih.gov/Health_Info/Bone/Osteoporosis/overview.asp#c.

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Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences research and extension programs are funded in part by Pennsylvania counties, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Where trade names appear, no discrimination is intended, and no endorsement by Penn State Extension is implied.

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Produced by Ag Communications and Marketing
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Code UK141 07/20pod