

Osteoporosis Prevention: Food

To be in good health, besides engaging in physical activity, it is recommended to have **a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D**. The calcium requirements vary by age and each individual's situation. Elderly people need about 1,000 mg of calcium and about 800 units of vitamin D per day. If your diet does not include sufficient amounts of vitamins and minerals, then there is a higher risk of bone fracture.

For elderly people with chronic insufficient food intake, it could be beneficial to take calcium and vitamin D supplements, but this does not substitute eating foods rich in these vitamins and minerals.

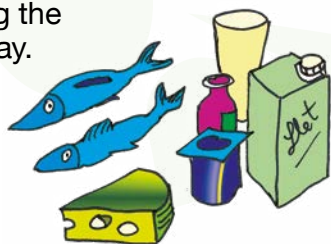
Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium into the bones. It is produced in the skin by the exposure to sunlight. It is recommended to take a daily 20-minute walk. It is important for bone growth and for elderly individuals, who have more difficulty absorbing calcium. If individuals do not leave their houses or places of residence, they should eat vitamin D rich foods. Other nutrients, like phosphorus, magnesium, vitamin K, etc. are also important, but to a lesser extent.

The best way to prevent osteoporosis is by introducing small changes into our daily habits and food intake.

Recommended Foods

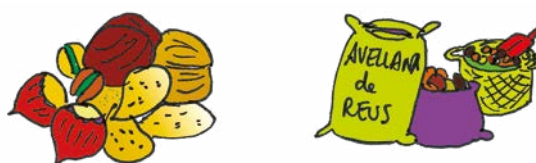
- **Two portions of dairy per day: milk, yogurt, cheeses, etc. They are the most calcium rich foods and their type of calcium is absorbed better into the body than from other foods.** Skim products of these foods contain less vitamin D. A diet which does not contain dairy should be carefully monitored to make sure the body is getting the required calcium per day.

- **Oily fish: salmon, mackerel, herring, tuna, sardines (including canned), catfish, anchovies, shrimp, etc. They**



contain calcium, vitamin D and omega-3 fatty acids, which prevent the loss of calcium through the urine and improve its absorption in the body, as well as help to control blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases.

- **Nuts: almonds, walnuts, pine nuts, hazelnuts, pistachios, etc. or seeds (sesame).** If they are eaten raw, also help to stabilize cholesterol.



- **Legumes: beans, chickpeas, soy and byproducts (tofu), etc.** are sources of vegetable protein. They reduce the need for animal protein, especially red meat, which decreases calcium absorption.

- **Fruits and vegetables: spinach, onion, garlic, cabbage, dark leafy greens, basil, turnips, broccoli, oranges, coconuts, figs, apples, pears, mangoes, bananas, dates, avocados and oats.**



- **Fish or cow liver and eggs yolks** are rich in Vitamin D.

Foods or habits to reduce

Tobacco, caffeine, salt, chocolate, sodas, alcohol, wholewheat bread and all wholewheat grains.

When you quit smoking or drinking alcohol your bone density partially recovers.

A moderate protein intake is essential to help you recover after a fracture. But large amounts of animal proteins promote bone loss.

Author: Lurdes Alonso

Scientific Review: Cristina Carbonell, Montserrat Romaguera and Jordi Puig

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Illustrations: Joan Josep Cabré

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