

Preventing Osteoporosis

Listed below are dietary and lifestyle habits, which have been shown to decrease the risk of osteoporosis. Traditionally, women in China experience a smoother transition at menopause than do women in industrialized Western countries, possibly because many of these guidelines are inherent in their cultural way of life. In modern Western society it is often necessary for women to make changes in their dietary, exercise, and lifestyle habits when they reach peri-menopause, in order to sustain good health in their remaining years.

Regular exercise is one of the best ways to prevent bone loss, and it promotes cardiovascular health. Forty minutes of weight bearing exercise, two or more times per week, has been shown to increase bone density. Building good bone mass before menopause is the best prevention for osteoporosis later.

Cola and soft drinks should be avoided as phosphates directly interfere with calcium absorption.

Caffeine increases the rate at which calcium is lost therefore should be limited or avoided. Green tea is a better choice due to the low caffeine content and the inclusion of valuable nutrients.

Cessation of smoking is recommended as it has been shown to lead to early menopause, a decrease in estrogen and decrease in bone mass. It also increases risk of heart attack.

Alcohol consumption should be minimized as it increase the loss of calcium from the bones, although in small quantities may enhance estradiol production.

Decrease amount of animal protein consumed to one serving daily, as too much protein increases calcium loss from the bones due to the high phosphorous content.

Choose meat and dairy products that are hormone free as many animal products contain synthetic estrogens.

Limiting simple sugars and carbohydrates helps to limit calcium loss.

A low sodium diet is best as salt causes increased loss of calcium through the urine.

Vitamins and minerals have been shown to support strong bones in various ways, such as vitamin D, beta carotene, vitamin C, magnesium, manganese, calcium, and boron.

Eat a nutritious diet rich in calcium with foods such as tofu, sesame seeds, canned fish with bones, dark leafy vegetables, seaweed, nuts, dried beans and peas, cabbage, broccoli.

Get plenty of rest as healing and rebalancing generally occurs during sleep and times of relaxation.

Maintain a healthy body weight is helpful as very low body fat will contribute to excessively low estrogen in the body; therefore tend to increase the severity of hot flashes and other menopausal symptoms.

Chinese herbs are effective for bone support as well as in the treatment or other peri-menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes. Ask your Oriental medicine practitioners about herbs and foods that nourish the Liver, Kidney, and Essence. Bone soup is an excellent dietary approach to supporting strong bones.