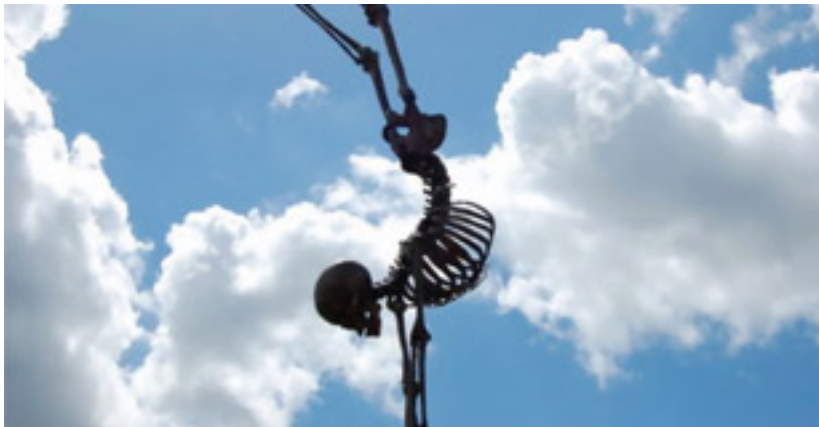


Divas Need Healthy Bones – TOO!

Written by Valecia Weeks, CPT, LMT
Wednesday, 13 March 2013 00:00

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Osteoporosis is the thinning of bone tissue and loss of bone density over time. There are no symptoms in the early stages of this disease; but over time other symptoms become obvious. A woman's bones may become painful or tender. Bones can also fracture with little or no trauma. There can also be a loss of height (as much as 6 inches) over time. Have you ever seen an individual, usually someone of seasoned age, who is starting to bend over forward? Usually that is from Osteoporosis. The condition is called "kyphosis".

Isn't it funny how we look at individuals with kyphosis and think to ourselves, "I can't imagine my fine body growing like that" But guess what, ladies, it can happen to the best of us. Although we may not be able to avoid osteoporosis, there are simple ways to keep the bones strong and reduce your risk of osteoporosis. **You can start young.** For those of you who are still my junior, think of your bones like you do your savings or retirement account...you have to start saving young so you can reap the benefits when you are older. The same goes for storing calcium and vitamin D in your bones as well as exercising to make and keep them healthy and strong.

Know your "T-Score". This is the number that is the result of a bone mineral density test. Ask your medical provider to test to you to see how strong your bones are. Your t-score combined with other factors, such as age, can help determine your risk for osteoporosis so that you don't find out the hard way by doing the simple task of walking then suddenly find yourself on an ambulance stretcher because your bones broke and caused a fall.

Aim for 1,200 mg of vitamin D each day. That is about 4 cups of nonfat milk or three cups of yogurt. If you are like me and can't take non-fat, try 2% instead of whole milk. If milk is not your drink of choice, try orange juice with calcium and vitamin D and consider taking supplements.

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DON'T SMOKE – limit drinking. Smoking reduces estrogen in women which tends to cause women to hit menopause sooner than they normally would, both of which accelerates bone loss. If you drink, keep it to no more than two drinks a day for men and one drink a day for women. Unfortunately, alcohol interferes with your body's ability to absorb calcium, and it also slows new bone formation.

Meat in Moderation. I know this is a killer for some; but meat can be considered a doubled edged sword. It's good in that your body needs protein to help calcium absorption in the intestines but on the other hand eating too much red meat, fish, pork and poultry can sap important resources from the bones. So, I guess as the saying goes, "eat

all things in moderation".

You're never too young or too old to improve the health of your bones. Osteoporosis prevention should begin in childhood. But it shouldn't stop there. Whatever your age, the habits you adopt now can affect your bone health for the rest of your life. Now is the time to take action.

Send your questions about women's health and fitness to www.assuringhands.massagetherapy.com . Just click the "contact" button and post your question(s) on the website.