

Preventing osteoporosis checklist



Osteoporosis is common, but there are some simple steps you can take to reduce your risk. Here's how you can take action.



1.2 million

Estimated number of Australians with osteoporosis



23%

Estimated proportion of women aged 50-plus who have osteoporosis



6%

Estimated proportion of men aged 50-plus who have osteoporosis

Your bone health to-do list



The following steps can help you to protect your bones.

Eat calcium-rich foods

Low calcium intake can increase the risk of osteoporosis. Adults should consume 1000mg of calcium per day as part of their daily diet, while women aged over 50 and men aged over 70 should aim for 1300mg.

Get some sun

Sunshine increases our vitamin D levels, which help to support our bones. Head outside with your arms and face uncovered for 15 minutes before 10am and after 3pm in summer, and 30 minutes at midday in winter.

Make sure you exercise

Exercise can help to prevent a loss of bone density. Research suggests that a combination of resistance training, weight-bearing exercise and balance training is most effective for our bones. Healthy Bones Australia is a good place to start for exercises to support bone health.

Avoid smoking

Smoking is a risk factor for osteoporosis.

Avoid excessive alcohol

As with smoking, excessive alcohol intake is a risk factor for osteoporosis.

Know your risks

Use Healthy Bones Australia's Know Your Bones (knowyourbones.org.au) self-assessment tool to understand if you have any risk factors for osteoporosis. If you think you may be at risk, it's important to see your doctor.

Questions to ask your doctor

If you think you may be at risk of osteoporosis or low bone density, the following questions may act as a starting point for a discussion with your doctor.

- Am I at risk of osteoporosis?
- What things put me at risk?
- What can I do to address these risk factors or support bone health more generally?
- Do I need to see any other health professionals or specialists?
- Do you recommend that I get a bone density scan?
- What will a bone density scan tell me?
- How often do I need a bone density scan?
- How do I book in for the scan?
- Do I need to do anything to prepare for the scan?
- How much will the bone density scan cost? Am I eligible for a Medicare rebate?
- How will I find out the results of the scan?
- What will happen if the results of the scan aren't normal?



For more information

australianunity.com.au/wellbeing

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