



May is Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month. Ten million Americans are estimated to have osteoporosis (8 million women and 2 million men). While it's often thought to be a disease of old age, osteoporosis can strike at any age. According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation (www.nof.org): "Osteoporosis, or porous bone, is a disease characterized by low bone mass and structural deterioration of bone tissue, leading to bone fragility and an increased susceptibility to fractures, especially of the hip, spine and wrist, although any bone can be affected." Put more simply, **osteoporosis is a condition in which the bones become weak and can break** from a minor fall or, in serious cases, from a simple action such as a sneeze. **Risk factors** include weight under 127 pounds, being a smoker, poor lifelong calcium intake, family history of osteoporosis, or having a chronic condition such as asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, thyroid disease or inflammatory bowel disease. Additional **risk factors** include long-term use of the steroid medication prednisone and early menopause. A Bone Mineral Density test (BMD) is the only way to diagnose osteoporosis and determine your risk for future fracture. Since osteoporosis can develop undetected for decades until a fracture occurs, early diagnosis is important.

Calcium plays a key role in building strong bones and is necessary for blood clotting and the proper functioning of nerves and muscles. Calcium intake is especially important during childhood when bone is formed. If calcium intake is inadequate, the body "borrows" calcium from your bones. Young children need the equivalent of 3 cups of milk daily and teenagers need the equivalent of 4 cups/day!) Other nutrients critical for bone strength include vitamin D which improves calcium absorption, magnesium, vitamin K, phosphorus, protein, potassium and zinc. The best way to get adequate amounts of these nutrients is through balanced eating. Dairy products are excellent choices as they contain many of these nutrients. Physical activity, especially weight bearing activity (walking, dancing, jogging, stair climbing and hiking) and resistance training with weights or bands, is also critical to building and maintaining strong bone structure throughout life.

How much calcium is needed in later years?

Adults 19 to 50 years of age should aim for consuming 1,000 milligrams of calcium per day. After age 50, calcium needs increase to 1200 mg. (REF: National Academy of Science) To give you a better idea, an 8-ounce glass of milk has about 300 milligrams of calcium. Choosing 1% or skim milk or low-fat dairy is a heart healthy choice. Low fat yogurt is a good choice for adding calcium, potassium., protein and vitamin D as well as beneficial bacteria to your body. **Be careful with your intake of cheese** as it contains a significant amount of saturated fat. Limit your intake or choose lower fat varieties such as part skim mozzarella, farmer's cheese, Neufchatel and goat cheese. You can also find lower fat cheddar, Monterey jack, Brie, Swiss and Colby with 25-33% less fat and calories. **Other food sources of calcium** include dark greens such as kale, bok choy and broccoli, fortified cereals and orange juice, sardines and salmon canned with bones and tofu that is processed with calcium sulfate. Another approach is to use high flavor cheeses such as extra sharp cheddar, Gorgonzola, Parmesan or Asiago and reduce the amount used. If you have difficulty getting enough calcium from the foods you eat, you may take a [calcium supplement](#) to make up the difference. Calcium is absorbed slowly and the **body cannot take in more than 500 mg at once. Naturally occurring calcium is more effectively absorbed than supplemental calcium.**

Sunday, May 11 is Mother's Day—still trying to think of something special to do for your Mom?

It's a big day for eating out but Moms enjoy home cooked meals and that can be a real cost savings!

Here are some healthy Mother's Day menu and recipe ideas:

http://eatingwell.com/recipes/collections/mothers_day.html?utm_source=EWTWNL

<http://www.cookinglight.com/cooking/fd/inseason/superpackage/0,14384,1736817,00.html?iid=email-weekly-20080508-web&PromKey=XET>

And don't forget the chocolate dipped strawberries! (one of this Mom's favorite and they are so easy!)

Other non-food suggestions might be a plant for the yard/garden or fresh flower bouquet, a manicure or pedicure or massage (done by you or a certificate to a local salon), note paper and stamps, a visit or gift certificate to her favorite coffee place, a book or magazine. The most important thing is to tell her you love her and appreciate her time and efforts in raising you!

Take part in I-CaPS (Information on cancer Prevention and Survivorship) a LiveStrong event next Tuesday (see attached flyer). Free pedometers, yellow wristbands, cancer prevention info and a walk beginning at 12:15 PM from the fountain north of MU—join us!

Watch for information on upcoming National Employee Health and Fitness Day event on May 21st!

I will be here for most of the summer... let me know if you need a "healthy eating tune up"! All ISU employees receive 3 free nutrition counseling sessions each calendar year!

Get out and enjoy the beautiful spring weather!!

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