



Invest in Your Bones Living with Osteoporosis Leaflet 5

Living with osteoporosis can be done actively and comfortably. Seek proper medical care, and make some lifestyle adjustments – such as making your environment safe so you can avoid falls.

Early detection of bone loss or osteoporosis is now possible with bone density testing (densitometry), so ask your physician about this test. Physicians may prescribe a treatment plan including calcium and vitamins D₂ and D₃, exercise, plus medication.

For men with hypogonadism, testosterone may be prescribed. A woman might consider estrogen replacement therapy, which is believed to be most effective in reducing bone loss during the five to ten years following menopause, when bone loss is at its peak. Studies show that starting estrogen replacement therapy later in life can still be beneficial.

It's never too late to make the necessary lifestyle changes, such as increasing your dietary calcium intake through healthful choices. Your body may need extra help to build bone and stop bone loss through some of these drugs—alendronate or calcitonin, which are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Remember the following about osteoporosis:

- It is largely preventable and treatable.
- It is a serious, debilitating disease.
- It is affected by the onset of menopause.
- It inhibits independence.
- It affects 8 out of 10 U. S. women and 2 out of 10 U. S. men.

For the latest information about your investment in your bones and where to locate bone density testing in your area, contact the National Osteoporosis Foundation, 1150 17th Street, N. W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20036-4603; check their website at <http://www.nof.org/osteoporosis/diseasefacts.htm>, or call them at (800) 223-9994.

U.S. Government Resources on Bone Health

- Bone Health and Osteoporosis: A Report of the Surgeon General – 4 fact sheets <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/bonehealth/factsheet.html>
- National Institutes of Health Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases—National Resource Center – fact sheets http://www.niams.nih.gov/Health_Info/Bone/
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases: Senior Health <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/osteoporosis/toc.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Bone Health Campaign http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition/nutrition_for_everyone/bonehealth/index.htm
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration – FDA Information for Seniors <http://www.fda.gov/oc/seniors/>

For additional information, contact your local county AgriLife Extension agent – Family and Consumer Sciences. Resources: Mary Kinney Bielamowicz, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., Regents Fellow, Professor & Extension Nutrition Specialist; and Sharon Francey Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., Associate Professor & Extension Nutrition Specialist; Nutrition & Food Science Department, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M System, College Station, Texas.