

News You Can Use: All About Your Bones

Bone and Body Composition Laboratory
Department of Foods and Nutrition, The University of Georgia



Who we are and what we do:

The UGA Bone and Body Composition Laboratory studies ways to improve bone health during childhood that will help prevent osteoporosis and broken bones later in life.

Our research shows that strong bones start in childhood and eating well and being active is important at all ages.

Why is this important?

- More broken wrists occur in children and teens compared to young adults.
- Osteoporosis is a major public health problem, as 1 in 2 women and 1 in 3 men over the age of 50 years are likely to experience a broken bone sometime in their life.
- Our studies help identify ways to improve bone strength during childhood, reducing the risk of broken bones in children and reducing the risk of osteoporosis as they grow to be adults.
- Our studies can help reduce healthcare costs related to broken bones and osteoporosis and can help you lead a healthier life.

What you can do:

- **Vitamin D** intakes of 600 IU per day are enough to promote strong bones in healthy children who also consume enough calcium. Foods such as oily fish, dairy products, as well as fortified cereals and orange juice, are good sources of vitamin D.
- The recommended intake of **calcium** is 1,000 mg per day for 4 to 8 year-olds and 1,300 mg per day for 9 to 13 year-olds. Calcium can be found in dairy products, dark leafy green vegetables, as well as fortified cereals and juices.
- High-impact **activities**, such as jumping games or gymnastics, help build strong bones in childhood that stay strong into adulthood (The 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans now include bone building exercises as recommendations).
- The **extra weight** carried by an obese child may not be helpful for bone strength. We are still studying this issue, but it is important to maintain a healthy weight in order to prevent other diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Want to know more?

- National Osteoporosis Foundation: <http://nof.org/>
- CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/vitamins/calcium.html>



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<http://www.fcs.uga.edu/fdn/research-bone-and-body-composition-laboratory>