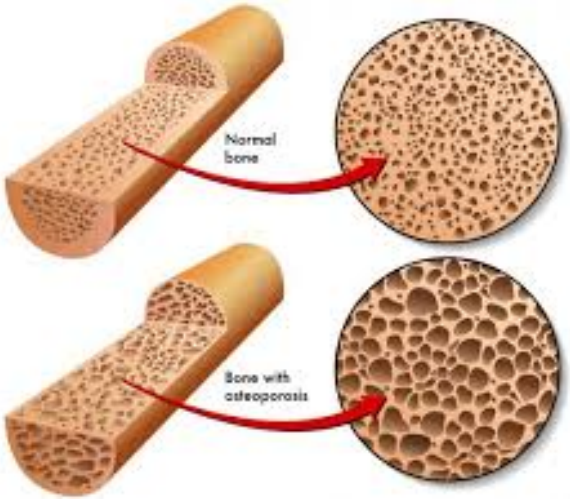
# Aging & Bone Health

As we age our bodies ability to grow new bone decreases. In our youth and up to the age of about 30, our body grows new bone faster than it sheds old bone cells. After age 30, the process of growing new bone cells starts to slow and by the time we are in our 50's for many people both male and female there is a risk of decreased bone density resulting in a risk of non impact fractures. Low bone density is referred to as Osteoporosis which means porous bones.




Osteoporosis is more prevalent in females but can also occur in males.

**Factors that increase the risk for osteoporosis in both men and women include:**

- **Having a family history of osteoporosis.** If your mother, father, or a sibling has been diagnosed with osteoporosis or has experienced broken bones from a minor injury, you are more likely to develop osteoporosis.
- **Lifestyle factors.** These include:
  - Smoking. People who smoke lose bone density faster than non-smokers.
  - Alcohol use. Heavy alcohol use can decrease bone formation, and it increases the risk of falling. According to some experts, 3 or more drinks a day increases your risk for osteoporosis.
  - Getting little or no exercise. Weight-bearing exercises—such as walking, jogging, stair climbing, dancing, or lifting weights—keep bones strong and healthy by working the muscles and bones against gravity. Exercise may improve your balance and decrease your risk of falling.

- Being small-framed or thin. Thin people and those with small frames are more likely to develop osteoporosis. But being overweight puts women at risk for other serious medical conditions, including type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and coronary artery disease (CAD).
- A diet low in foods containing calcium and vitamin D.

- **Breaking a bone after age 40 doing something that wouldn't normally cause a broken bone**, such as a simple fall from standing-height or less.
- **Having certain medical conditions.** Some medical conditions, such as hyperthyroidism or hyperparathyroidism, put you at greater risk for osteoporosis.
- **Taking certain medicines.** Several medicines, such as corticosteroids used for long periods, cause bone thinning.
- **Having certain surgeries**, such as having your ovaries removed before menopause.

https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/te7603

**Reduce Your Risk of Developing Osteoporosis**

It's possible to prevent, delay or reduce bone loss through a healthy lifestyle. Assessing your risk for osteoporosis and related fractures can help you identify lifestyle factors that you can change.

Basic bone health for all individuals includes regular weight bearing and resistance type exercise as well as adequate vitamin and mineral intake. (Consult your physician before beginning any exercise program.)

Exercises that focus on balance (e.g., Tai Chi, yoga and/or exercises in standing) are beneficial for people who are at risk of falling.

https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/chronic-diseases/osteoporosis.html

**What can you do from home?**

Check out the home based strength workouts on Thrive that use basic household items like duffle bags, food cans,milk jugs or your body weight.

Take part in the online classes offered by Curtis Health fitness professionals.

Work on your balance – practice standing on one foot while brushing your teeth or washing dishes.

Consult with your doctor about whether a bone density test is appropriate.

Talk to your doctor or a registered dietician about whether any dietary changes are appropriate including any need for vitamin and mineral supplements.