



NUTRITION FOR HEALTHY BONES

Fast Facts about Bones

- Bones make up the body's skeleton. They protect the organs and help move muscles.
- There are 206 bones in the adult body.
- Bones are living tissues that constantly add new bone and remove old bone (bone remodeling).
- Around the age of 25-30, bones are as hard and strong as they will ever be.

Strong Bones are Healthy Bones

- During the childhood and teenage years the bones grow in mass (size) and density (hardness).
- It is important to make your bones as strong as possible when you are young because everyone loses bone strength (bone mass) as they get older.
 - Osteoporosis: Bone disease in older adults when bones become weak and brittle and break easily
- Strong bones early in life results in stronger bones later in life!

Ways to Strengthen Bones

- Calcium and vitamin D are the nutrients bones need to be strong.
- Calcium is found in many foods: Dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheese), nuts, orange juice with added calcium, dark and leafy greens, beans, and others.
- Vitamin D is found in canned fish and is also added to many foods with calcium. Sunshine also gives the body vitamin D.
- Calcium supplements (chews, tablets) are available but it is important to talk to your doctor first before taking them.

This chart shows how much calcium the body needs daily:

AGE	MG/DAY
Infants 0 to 6 months	200
Infants 6 to 12 months	260
1 to 3 years old	700
4 to 8 years old	1,000
9 to 18 years old	1,300
19 to 50 years old	1,000
51 years old +	1,200

- Physical activity is also needed to make bones strong.
 - 60 minutes every day for children and teens
 - 30 minutes every day for adults
 - Examples are jogging, weight-lifting, dancing, hiking and many other fun activities

Creative Eating Tips

- Add a small amount of flavored syrup to milk
- Offer vanilla or chocolate soy milk to lactose-intolerant children
- Add a can of kidney beans to a favorite chili recipe
- Make breakfast burritos with eggs, cheese and calcium-fortified tortillas
- Freeze yogurt in ice cube trays with popsicle sticks for a frozen treat
- Add leafy greens like kale or spinach to soups

Sources for More Information

- *Kids Health* - kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_center/healthy_eating/calcium.html#cat20738
- *Best Bones Forever* – www.bestbonesforever.gov
- *National Institutes of Health* - http://www.niams.nih.gov/Health_Info/Bone/Bone_Health/Nutrition/default.asp
- *Bone Builders* – www.cals.arizona.edu/maricopa/fcs/bb/index.htm

Our orthopaedists can help answer more questions about your child's bone health.

Call our office at (404) 321-9900 for an appointment!

Please Note: The information included in this fact sheet is for educational purposes only. It contains general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. Consult with your child's doctor if you have any questions or concerns about your child's health. Reading the information in this fact sheet does not create a physician-patient relationship.