

Orthopaedic Connection

How To Keep Bones Strong Longer

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Last week I was talking about lower bone density (osteopenia), bone density testing and some recommendations.

Half of all women over age 50 end up having a fracture of something (hip, wrist, vertebra, etc.) as a result of low bone density.

Weight Bearing and Resistance Exercise

Today I am concentrating on one part of the approach to treating low bone density. It is a way to help you maintain the bone you have.

Weight bearing means just that, you have to be walking. Most people sit way too much. If a chair or something to sit on is available, most people head for it.

If you are not accustomed to exercising you should start slowly.

If you already do a lot of walking during the day, you are already doing the weight bearing part.

It is recommended that you get 30 minutes of walking exercise each day and at least 5 out of 7 days each week.

It would not be a good idea to begin walking 30 minutes a day if you are not used to doing it. Build up slowly adding a few minutes each time you do it.

Walking loads your hips and your spine. O.K, what else?

Resistance Training

Resistance training is simply exercises that pull on your long bones from different directions.

Resistance training includes:

- Elastic resistance therabands
- Dumbbells
- Weight machines
- Your own body weight

Start with a level or resistance that enables you to do 10 repetitions with the feeling that the last 2 are somewhat more difficult to do. Gradually increase the resistance so as not to plateau.

Good Advice

Resistance training needs to be done correctly and one program doesn't fit everyone. It is wonderful and ideal if a person can spend one or two sessions with a physical therapist, trainer, exercise professional or anyone who has some knowledge about the stuff more than you do.

That way you can learn correctly which exercises to do, how many reps, how often, etc.

Extra credit would be to add knee to chest stretches and lumbar extension exercise.

The Combination

So you have learned last week and this week that it is possible to keep bone (and muscles) strong longer. It's very important to know where you are starting out. That's where the bone density test comes in.

Walking and resistance training together (the combination) are something everyone can do to help themselves. No one can do it for you.

What are you waiting for? It is still early in the year. Make a resolution to walk 30 minutes 5 days a week and start resistance training.

You can do this!

Office Website and Gratiot County Herald Archive

Wow! Your window to the Orthopaedic and musculoskeletal world opens at www.orthopodsurgeon.com. It contains the Website Library of information, Your Orthopaedic Connection and GCH archive of all previous articles.

You will be amazed at all the helpful information it contains.

All of the information pertains to everything I treat in the office and hospital.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush