



Factors Important for Bone Health

While genetic factors play an important role in determining bone mass, it is critical not to underestimate the vital role that lifestyle factors can play in promoting bone health status.

Here are some ways to support good bone health:

- Engaging in regular weight-bearing exercise (especially in youth)
- Getting adequate amounts of vitamin D (ideally from sunshine)
- Consuming a low-sodium diet
- Avoiding excess dietary protein (especially animal protein)
- Consuming large amounts of fruits and vegetables

While calcium is an essential mineral for the structure of our bones, several other nutrients work together in complex ways to maintain the health of our bones. In fact, evidence shows that just supplementation of calcium inconclusively impacts bone health. Moreover, healthy dietary patterns have been associated with increased bone mineral density and lower fracture risk. In addition to calcium, here are other key nutrients, and their whole food, plant-based sources, to give your bones a boost and help them stay healthy and strong:

Magnesium

Magnesium is a mineral that plays an important role in maintaining healthy bones. It contributes to increased bone density. Brown rice, dark green vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds, and whole grain cereals are rich sources of magnesium.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is essential for making collagen, the protein that binds connective tissue in bones. Citrus fruits, peppers, tomatoes, and other fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of vitamin C.

Vitamin K

Vitamin K is thought to stimulate bone formation. You can find vitamin K in the same foods that have an abundance of calcium, like dark leafy greens, beans, and whole soy like edamame and tofu.

Potassium

Potassium decreases the loss of calcium and increases the rate of bone building. Oranges, bananas, potatoes, and many other fruits, vegetables, and beans are all rich sources of potassium.