

healthier YOU

your healthy living newsletter



OSTEOPOROSIS

means bones that are less solid than they should be and are most likely to break.

Although osteoporosis occurs more commonly as we age, it can occur in younger people as well as a result of other conditions. As health care providers we see patients on a regular basis who have suffered broken wrists and hips as well as crushed vertebrae in the spine. Many of these injuries wouldn't have happened if the bones were stronger and better able to withstand simple accidents and activity.



Osteoporosis Canada estimates that this condition affects 1.4 million Canadians:

- 25% of women over age 50
- Approx 12% of men over age 50

PREVENTION

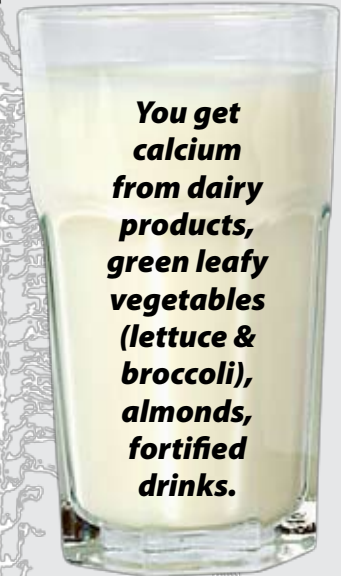
Getting enough calcium in your diet is crucial as calcium is the foundation for healthy bones. Vitamin D is also important as this vitamin helps your body absorb calcium and store it in your bones.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation in the U.S. recommends that **adults under age 50 get 1,000 mg of calcium and 400-800 IU (International Units) of Vitamin D daily**, while those **over age 50 get over 1,200 mg of calcium and 800-1,000 IU of Vitamin D daily**.

Vitamin D is made by your skin when you're in the sun and can also be found in most dairy products in Canada.

Exercise is also crucial for preventing osteoporosis because the body lays down more calcium in bones that regularly have muscles pulling on them.

The type of exercises that are most effective for building strong bones are running, climbing stairs and jumping or weight-lifting exercises. Talk to your health care provider before engaging in new exercises if you are already at risk for osteoporosis.



You get calcium from dairy products, green leafy vegetables (lettuce & broccoli), almonds, fortified drinks.

Smoking and alcohol have been shown to decrease bone density because they reduce your body's ability to store calcium in your bones.

Did You Know...

Having a lot of houseplants can help prevent dry skin. Plants add moisture to the air in two ways:

- Through photosynthesis (their leaves produce water)
- Evaporation from their watered soil



Getting Fit Part II

Resistance Training applies to any type of exercise where you put more resistance on your muscles than you normally would. Some good examples are free-weights, weight machines, and elastic bands. If you want to build muscular strength and endurance this is the area to work on. Research has shown that resistance training is beneficial for muscle health, weight-loss and weight maintenance and for improving independence in deconditioned and elderly patients.

For the most benefit, target big muscle groups with exercises such as squats, lunges, bench press, push-ups, lat pull downs or low rows. Performing the exercises with proper technique is important to reduce your risk of injury. Speak to a qualified exercise professional to ensure proper exercise.

- **You should have 8-10 different exercises and perform at least 1 set (8-12 repetitions) for each exercise.**
- **The weight should be heavy enough that you can't lift it more than 8-12 repetitions without having to rest.**
- **For elderly patients, it's best to use a slightly lighter weight and perform sets of 10-15 repetitions.**
- **Ideally, for steady improvement, try 2-3 times per week for these exercises.**



LifeMark Health, proudly Canadian, is an intergraded health care provider of assessment services, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, occupational health services and home medical equipment.

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Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

- Andrew Kelly -
LifeMark Occupational Services

The carpal tunnel is formed by a ligament (band of tissue) passing over the palm side of the wrist and attaches to bones in the wrist. The carpal tunnel has structures passing under it including tendons and the median nerve. Compression and irritation of the nerve causes the structure to become inflamed. Symptoms include numbness, tingling, burning sensations, pain and muscle weakness.

The ways we use our wrist for job related activities can also increase the risk for the development of carpal tunnel syndrome. If you use a specific tool or computer devices (mouse and keyboard) with your wrist held in non-neutral positions repetitively and for prolonged periods of time, you increase the risk of irritation to the structures passing through the carpal tunnel.

Recommendations to reduce risks for office workers include:

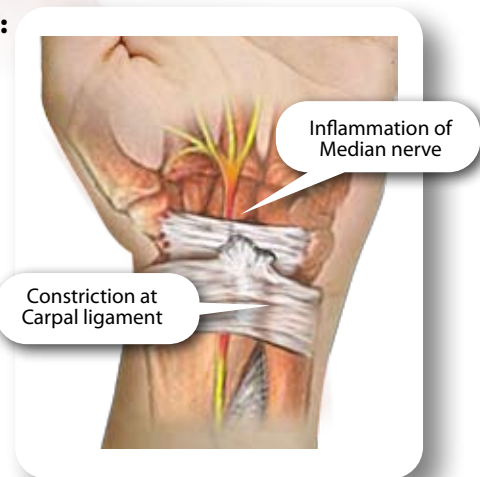
- Regular breaks from typing and mousing activities:
 - At least 45 seconds every 45 minutes in addition to regularly scheduled breaks
- Proper workstation design promoting neutral postures:
 - Arm rest height supporting the forearms without shoulder hiking
 - Keyboard resting on a flat, stable surface at a height consistent with the level of the arm rests of the chair
 - An upward tilt of the keyboard is not recommended as it promotes wrist extension

Wrist rests are not recommended even though people may believe the gel pads provide comfort. In actuality, wrist rests increase the amount of compression on the underside of the wrist. Fat pad rests are acceptable to use as long as it is the fat pads of the palm of the hand that are in contact with the device and not the wrist.

Other treatment options:

- Icing when inflammation occurs
- Regular rest breaks
- Medication as well as splints and bracing as directed by your family doctor

If the above treatments do not provide relief, your doctor may recommend cortisone injections to control inflammation or surgery.



ABOUT OUR WRITERS

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The SKINNY on CHOLESTEROL

We've all heard that too much cholesterol is a bad thing but this isn't exactly true. Without cholesterol, your body couldn't function; cholesterol is used in cell membranes throughout your body and in making certain hormones as well. A certain class of cholesterol also help protect your arteries and reduce the risk of heart disease. The key is to understand your cholesterol levels and how you can control them.

There are three things to keep an eye on when you have your cholesterol levels checked.

HDL (High Density Lipoproteins) - These are the good guys. High levels of HDL cholesterol help protect your heart and arteries. HDL levels above 1.5 mmol/L are desirable.

LDL (Low Density Lipoproteins) - These are the bad guys. LDLs have a tendency to stick to the walls of blood vessels. This causes the diameter of the blood vessel to reduced, which increases blood pressure and interfere with blood flow. The goal is to keep this level below 1.8 mmol/L.

Triglycerides - When you digest fats or convert other foods into fats for storage, these are transported in the bloodstream as triglycerides. High levels of triglycerides are usually associated with poor cholesterol levels. The standard is to keep these levels below 1.7 mmol/L

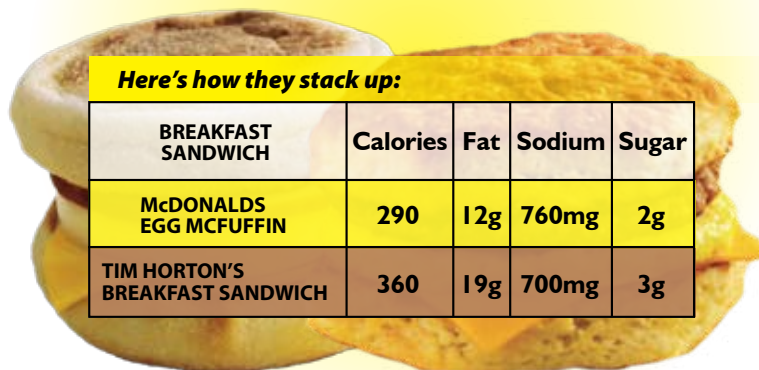
Tips on how to lower your Cholesterol:

- Monitor what you eat
- Exercise regularly
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Quit smoking

Discuss medication alternatives with your family physician if these methods aren't enough.

Comparing Breakfasts

You're driving down the road looking for a quick breakfast and you see two of the most common signs in Canada, the Golden Arches and the stripped Tim Horton's sign. Whose breakfast sandwich is the healthiest?



Here's how they stack up:

BREAKFAST SANDWICH	Calories	Fat	Sodium	Sugar
McDONALDS EGG MCFUFFIN	290	12g	760mg	2g
TIM HORTON'S BREAKFAST SANDWICH	360	19g	700mg	3g

Coming up in our next issue:

Knee Arthritis
Flexibility

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If you have a pre-existing medical condition/injury or are in pain, please consult your health care professional prior to changing your diet or commencing any exercise.

If you wish to receive future mailings please contact us at:
info@lifemark.ca or 1.800.265.9197

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