



February 2023 Newsletter

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Healthy Bones are Built with Calcium Foods, Beverages, and Physical Activity By Emma Dhimitri, Community Health Specialist, Boulder County

Why is bone health important?

Bones provide many key functions in your body. They help you walk and move around, protect your organs, and store calcium for use in your body. Your bones are constantly changing; new bone is being made and old bone is being broken down. When you are young, your body is making bone faster than it is breaking it down. As we age, this ratio shifts, and we break down bone faster than our bodies make it. This can lead to a disease called osteoporosis. Therefore, it is important to build bone density when we are young and maintain bone density as we age.

What affects bone health?

Bone health is impacted by several different factors. Some factors we can't control. For example, women are more likely to develop osteoporosis than men. However, we can promote bone health by getting enough calcium and vitamin D from foods in our diets and regular physical activity. Calcium is a building block of strong bones and vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium. Our bodies make vitamin D from the sun, and it can be found in salmon, tuna, and egg yolks. Some milks, juices, and cereals are also fortified with vitamin D.

What can you do to help your bone health?

Try to reach your recommended dietary allowance for calcium every day.

Age	Male	Female
0-6 months*	200 mg	200mg
7-12 months*	260 mg	260 mg
1-3 years	700 mg	700 mg
4-8 years	1,000 mg	1,000 mg
9-13 years	1,300 mg	1,300 mg
14-18 years	1,300 mg	1,300 mg
19-50 years	1,000 mg	1,000 mg
51-70 years	1,000 mg	1,200 mg

*Adequate Intake



- Choose dairy products such as low-fat yogurt, milk and cheese for great sources of calcium.
- Look for foods that are fortified with calcium and vitamin D. Items such as orange juice, soy milk, cereal and tofu have calcium added to them. Look for the words 'calcium fortified' or the nutrition facts label to determine how much calcium is in your food.
- Eat more dark leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, collard greens, Bok choy or broccoli, all which are good sources of calcium.
- Exercise to help strengthen your bones. Any exercise where your body is carrying your own weight helps to grow bone strength.

Let's Talk

Because bone density is built during youth, it is important to talk to children about building strong bones! Explain to children that they can build strong bones by playing their favorite sports, games, and playing outside with friends and pets. They need to eat or drink lots of calcium to grow strong bones. Encourage children to eat low fat dairy products, green vegetables, and foods with extra calcium and vitamin D added (fortified). Staying active and eating well allows us to become the strongest we can be - with impacts that last a lifetime!



Recipe for Health

Tofu and Broccoli Stir Fry – Yields 4 Servings

Tofu and Broccoli are both great sources of calcium.

Try this quick, easy and affordable dinner recipe!

Ingredients:

- 1 package (14 oz) firm tofu
- 2 cups fresh or frozen broccoli
- 1 small onion
- 2 cloves of garlic minced
- 2 tablespoons reduced sodium soy sauce or gluten free tamari
- Red pepper flakes and black pepper to taste
- Hot cooked white or brown rice



1. Wash hands and food contact surfaces with soap and water
2. Drain tofu and chop into bite sized cubes (*Tofu is easily cut with a table knife, so let children help with this task*)
3. Rinse vegetables under running water (*With a stepstool, sleeves rolled up and a few extra towels at the ready, rinsing vegetables is a fun way children can help*)
4. Chop onion and broccoli into bite sized pieces (*Children can help break broccoli florets into bite sized pieces*)
5. Heat the olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the garlic and onion and stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds
6. Add the tofu to the pan and cook until it starts to turn golden brown, about 5 minutes
7. Add the broccoli to the pan and cook until it is tender, about 5 minutes, longer if you are using frozen broccoli
8. Stir in soy sauce and season with pepper and red pepper flakes to taste
9. Cook rice according to package, and serve stir fry over rice
10. Top with hot sauce if you prefer a spicier dish

Optional: You can add other vegetables such as bell peppers, carrots or mushrooms to this stir fry. Also consider adding chopped nuts such as peanuts or almonds for an extra crunch.