

# SUMMER SHAPE UP!

## SUMMER'S BACK!

Summer is the time to rediscover what the great outdoors has to offer. But remember, easy does it. If you've been inactive for a long time, it's easy to be overzealous and cause an injury whether you're gardening, playing tennis or simply taking an extra long hike.

Make sure you warm-up and stretch before any activity, and don't try to do too much at once. Each new activity puts stresses and strains on your muscles, joints and back, so ease into it. It's a good idea to consult a chiropractor or fitness professional before beginning a new fitness program as they will be able to provide advice about the kind of activities that would benefit you. Let them know what your goals are or if you have an old injury you could aggravate. You may also wish to discuss types of cross-training that will enhance your level of fitness.

Exercise is very beneficial for your entire body — including your back. Weight-bearing activities such as hiking, brisk walking, stair climbing and dancing all strengthen your bones, muscles and joints and may help protect you against osteoporosis, a serious disease that results in deterioration of bone mass, especially in older people (see page 3).

An oversized waistline can lead to weak muscles in your abdomen. This means that your organs and lower spine are not being held correctly inside your body. This can result in back pain. Even a little activity three to four times a week can go a long way to improving your overall health and well-being.



## TIPS FOR PAIN & INJURY FREE EXERCISE THIS SUMMER!

- **Take it slow!** Try some easy jogging, swimming, and daily stretching to start. Always stretch before and after each activity. Ask your chiropractor about a regular routine of exercise that's best for you.
- **Use the right equipment!** Adults and children should always wear helmets for biking, and lifejackets for boating and water sports. Sun protection – a hat, T-shirt and sunscreen – is a must. So is good footwear. The right shoes will give you balance, support, and protection. Your chiropractor can check to see if you need orthotics to correct the position of your feet and help prevent knee, hip, and back problems.
- **Eat well!** Make healthy eating part of your daily routine. Include at least eight glasses of water a day (beer and coffee don't count!). When you're active, make sure you have lots of water or sports drinks to replenish your body's fluids, especially in hot weather. Your chiropractor can help you learn more about how to eat right.



## WATER & HYDRATION

### ARE YOU DRINKING ENOUGH???

Water is critical for our survival. In fact, after oxygen, it is the second most necessary life-sustaining factor. Under normal circumstances, people can live for weeks without food, but we can only survive without water for a few days.

The human body requires adequate water to maintain its function. As we age, we lose a significant amount of water in the body. For example, 75% of infants' weight generally consists of water, but a 50-year-old female's weight may consist of only 50% water. Water helps form the fluid in our joints, the mucous in our lungs, and many other bodily fluids. In addition, it is necessary when we exercise or are exposed to high temperatures—the evaporation of sweat helps cool us.

The human body strives to maintain balance between the amount of water that we lose vs. what we take in. Thirst is the body's way to tell us we need water. When the body has too little fluid, it also reduces water loss by making our urine more concentrated. Generally speaking, most of our water loss occurs through breathing, sweating, urination and bowel movements. Abnormalities in any of these functions—for example, diarrhea—can profoundly affect the balance of our hydration.

It is also possible that drinking too much water without getting enough sodium and potassium may cause "hyperhydration" or "water intoxication." Both dehydration and hyperhydration can lead to serious health problems.

### How do I stay properly hydrated?

#### General guidelines for hydration:

- **Inactive adults:** minimal requirement of 1-3.1L/day; adequately replaces estimated minimum respiratory, urinary, fecal, and insensible water losses.
- **Physically active individuals:** 2-16L/day depending on activity and individual
- **Water replacement:** 1L per kg of body weight lost (i.e. 2 cups per lb lost)
- **Cool beverages of 50-60 degrees** are the best forms of fluid for the body. If an activity lasts longer than 1 hour, a sports drink is often recommended.
- **Fluids with salt** (e.g., sodium, potassium) are beneficial because they increase thirst. The salt also helps replace what's lost through sweat. If you choose a sports drink, it should contain no more than 7% of carbohydrates per serving.
- **Avoid fruit juices, carbohydrate gels, sodas, alcohol, and high-sugar sports drinks.** These may dehydrate the body further by stimulating excessive urine production and/or decreasing your overall beneficial fluid intake.

#### SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION:

- thirst
- weakness
- nausea
- irritability
- dizziness
- confusion
- decreased performance
- headache
- cramps
- heart palpitations

### WHAT IS DEHYDRATION?

When we lose excessive amounts of water, or water and electrolytes, such as sodium and potassium, we get dehydrated. We feel the effects of dehydration in many ways, including weakness, abnormal heart rhythms, and fluid accumulation in the abdomen and/or the lungs. In a situation with increased water loss, such as physical exertion, dehydration can happen much quicker. In fact, dehydration can affect an athlete after less than 1 hour of exercise.

We are considered dehydrated when we've lost 1-2% of our body weight secondary to fluid loss. For example, a 150-lb. athlete who loses more than 3 lbs. may begin to feel the effects of dehydration. If we lose more than 3% of our body weight, we are at greater risk for heat-related illnesses like cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

## OSTEOPOROSIS

### NOT JUST AN ELDERLY DISEASE!

Osteoporosis has become an epidemic in the United States. About 10 million people—80 percent of them women—suffer from the chronic condition that leads to debilitating and life-threatening fractures. What's worse, the number of people with low bone mass—high risk for osteoporosis development—keeps growing.

The reasons for the increase are not yet clear, but research points to lifestyle and diet. The bony structure is built in childhood—and weight-bearing physical activity and proper nutrition are essential. Today's children, however, spend most of their time sitting in front of TV sets or computer monitors and drink calcium-robbing sodas, instead of calcium-rich milk. The inactivity and calcium imbalance makes them more likely to develop osteoporosis.

### OSTEOPOROSIS SCREENING

One of the most common bone diseases, osteoporosis is also one of the most preventable. Because osteoporosis is painless until a fracture actually occurs, bone density screening should be used to help diagnose the disease early on. The screening should be done every 2 years, especially in people with the following risk factors for osteoporosis development:

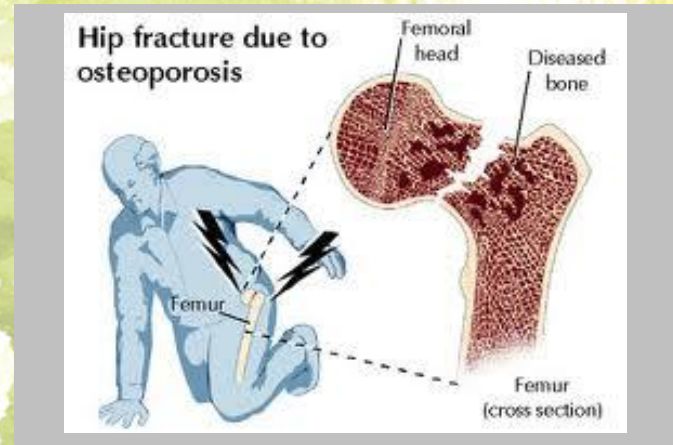
- Female
- Menopausal
- Small frame
- Ovary removal or menopause by age 45
- Prolonged hormonal imbalances
- Known calcium and vitamin D deficiencies
- Insufficient physical activity
- White or Asian ancestry
- Smoker
- Excess caffeine intake (more than 3 cups of coffee, tea or soda a day)
  - More than 2 alcoholic drinks per day
  - Regular use of certain medications (glucocorticoids, thyroid hormone, anticonvulsants, and aluminum-containing antacids)
  - History of eating disorders

**Osteoporosis screening and prevention are especially important because bone loss is irreversible and can only be stabilized, not improved, unless one uses a medication.**

### SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Be careful when bending and lifting heavy objects, including children. When lifting, bend from the knees, not the waist, and try to avoid hunching over while sitting or standing.

Remove throw rugs, electrical cords, and other objects you may trip on from the areas where you walk. Falls from a standing position for an osteoporosis patient often mean fractures.



### EXERCISE

Start a regular exercise program. Exercise puts stress on the bone and helps it strengthen and remodel. Exercise for at least 20 minutes 3 times a week. However, if you have had a fracture, fall frequently, or have osteoporosis, consult with your health care provider before starting any exercise program.

Tai Chi and other weight-bearing activities, such as jogging, walking, stair climbing, playing racquet sports, aerobics, and dancing, can be beneficial. These exercises improve flexibility and balance, reducing the risk of falling and fractures. Resistance exercises that increase muscle mass and strengthen bones, such as weight lifting, are generally recommended.

Spend time outdoors. Exposure to sunlight increases your level of vitamin D—a necessary element for absorption of calcium, which prevents osteoporosis development.

### NUTRITION

Decrease consumption of foods high in phosphorus, such as soda, potato chips, hot dogs, bacon, beer, biscuits, crackers, white rice, liver, bologna and peanuts. Too much phosphorus decreases absorption of calcium and other minerals and weakens the bone.

Calcium is essential to building and protecting the bones. Good sources of calcium are milk, cheese, yogurt, broccoli, kale, spinach, and rhubarb. If you are looking for a calcium supplement, try one that's highly absorbable, such as microcrystalline hydroxyapatite concentrate (MCHC). But don't overdo it. Excess calcium may cause kidney stones, so ask your health care provider about your individual supplement amount.

Check with your health care provider if you are getting enough vitamin D. Without vitamin D, the body won't absorb calcium.



## SENIOR'S CORNER: FALL PREVENTION HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST



### All living spaces:

- remove throw rugs
- secure carpet edges
- remove low furniture & objects on floor
- reduce clutter
- remove cords & wires on floor
- check adequate lighting at night (especially along path to the bathroom)
- secure carpet or treads on stairs
- install handrails on staircases
- eliminate chairs that are too low to sit in or get out of easily
- do not wax your floors, or use non-skid wax
- ensure the telephone can be reached from the floor

### Bathroom:

- install grab bars in the bathtub/shower and by the toilet
- use rubber mats in the bathtub/shower
- Take up floor mats when you aren't using the bathtub/shower to avoid tripping over them
- install a raised toilet seat

### Outdoors:

- repair cracked sidewalks
- install handrails on stairs and steps
- trim shrubbery along the pathway to home
- Install adequate lighting by doorways and along walkways leading to doors.

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