

Maintain Strong Bones with Exercise

Women begin to lose bone mass around the age of 30, putting them at risk for osteoporosis (thin, brittle bones) and associated fractures and back pain. Nutritional adjustments, such as increasing daily calcium intake, have been shown to increase bone density, but can exercise adjustments benefit as well?

An article published in the journal *Sports Medicine* investigated the potential role of exercise in helping women maintain bone mass. The researchers analyzed 21 different studies and presented their conclusions:

- € Regular exercise can delay or halt bone loss in women.
- € Weightbearing exercises are considerably more effective than exercises that do not involve any loading.
- € Premenopausal and postmenopausal women can benefit from a consistent exercise routine.

So what constitutes "weightbearing exercise"? Basically, it's any activity that stresses your bones against your full body weight, such as walking, running, tennis, step aerobics, or stair climbing (actual stair climbing, not on a machine). All those rowers, bicycles, gliders and ski machines at the gym will provide a good cardiovascular workout, but they won't help you build or maintain bone mass.

Talk to your chiropractor about your particular exercise and nutritional needs as a woman. A consistent fitness program that includes weightbearing and non-weightbearing exercises can help keep you healthy inside and out.

Reference:

Ernst E. Exercise for female osteoporosis. A systematic review of randomized clinical trials *Sports Medicine* 1998: Vol. 25, No. 6, pp359-68.



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