

# Osteoporosis Myths Debunked!

**#1 Myth** Osteoporosis is a health concern for women rather than men

**FACT** Although osteoporosis is more common in women, it has been increasingly diagnosed in men, who are more likely to suffer from disability and death from fractures which they typically develop at an older age. Osteoporotic fractures occur in one-third of women and one-fifth of men aged above 50.



Incidences of hip fractures

**#3 Myth** There are no signs of osteoporosis until you reach the point of fracture

**FACT** Although osteoporosis is generally a silent disease, there are some warning signs:



Loss of height



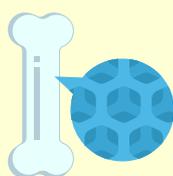
Stooped posture



Sudden back pain without an obvious cause

**#2 Myth** Osteoporosis only occurs in the elderly

**FACT** The elderly is at a higher risk of developing osteoporosis. However, it may affect anyone between the ages of 20 and 50 due to the lack of symptoms in the early stages. Peak bone mass occurs during adolescence until mid-twenties, and while bone formation continues to happen after that, you tend to lose more bone mass than you produce. People who developed a higher peak bone mass when young are better protected against osteoporosis and related fractures later in life.



**#4 Myth** Low calcium level causes osteoporosis

**FACT** Calcium is an important part of bone and overall health. A variety of other nutrients are also essential for bone health:



- Vitamin K
- Magnesium
- Phosphorus
- Potassium
- Vitamin B
- Vitamin D (for your body to absorb calcium)

Data taken from International Osteoporosis Foundation, National Osteoporosis Foundation, and Journal of Orthopaedic Surgery

Contributed by Goh Xin Yi, Senior Pharmacist, and Sabrina Leong, Senior Pharmacist, Department of Pharmacy



# Supplements Myths Debunked!

## #1 Myth Taking extra calcium supplements can prevent osteoporosis

**FACT** Taking more calcium than you need does not provide any extra benefits. You should follow the dose recommended by your doctor or pharmacist. Taking more than 4,000mg of calcium a day can cause:



Constipation



Nausea



Kidney stones

## #2 Myth Most people do not need to take a vitamin D supplement

**FACT** Vitamin D helps to increase the absorption of calcium. You can get vitamin D from your diet or through exposing your skin to sunlight two times a week for 5 to 30 minutes each time.



## #3 Myth If you drink plenty of milk and exercise, you are not at risk of osteoporosis

**FACT** Even if you drink plenty of milk and exercise, you may still be at risk of osteoporosis. There are many reasons why people get osteoporosis, including:



Having a family history of bone fractures



Being small and thin



Smoking



Drinking too much alcohol



Taking certain medications



Having certain medical conditions



# Osteoporosis an avoidable threat!

## Factors that can accelerate bone loss

- Family history
- Menopause
- Other existing chronic conditions

## Tips to ensure a bone-healthy lifestyle regardless of your age



### Exercise regularly

Weight-bearing, muscle strengthening and balance-training exercises are highly encouraged.



### Ensure a diet rich in bone-healthy minerals

- Calcium, vitamin D and protein are essential for bone health.
- Safe exposure to sunlight will help you get enough vitamin D.



### Avoid negative lifestyle habits

- Maintain a healthy body weight.
- Avoid smoking and excessive drinking.



### Find out whether you have risk factors - get tested and treated if required

Inform your doctor especially if you have suffered from a previous fracture or have specific diseases and medications which may affect bone health.

If you are at high risk, you will likely need medication to ensure optimal protection against fracture.

**Take action early to prevent Osteoporosis and  
fight this 'silent' disease!**

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