

How to Prevent Osteoporosis Through Fun Fitness

You are a 40 year old female and you've just had a routine bone-density test and your doctor is telling you that your bones are as frail as that of a 75 year old. What do you do? How do you reverse that? You've been taking the calcium supplement that was recommended by your physician. What now? As you are leaving the doctor's office you are handed a pamphlet that is titled "How to reverse the onset of Osteoporosis." You clutch it in your hand and can't wait to get home to read it. It talks about weight-bearing exercise. It mentions weight-training. It talks about impact. The words are so confusing. Bones tend to degenerate when they are not used, just like muscles. Today we are very sedentary because we have so many modern conveniences that we don't ask our bones to do too much. The answer to reversing the affects of osteoporosis would be to be more active. Play more. Weight-bearing exercises are those that put stress on the bones (i.e. walking, jogging, slogging, jump roping, hopping, dancing). It has been said that we don't stop playing because we get old; rather we get old because we stop playing. Use the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator. Go to the Mall and window shop. Try not to sit as much. Make a rule to stand and walk when you are on the phone. If you stop after work for groceries, park as far away from the store as you can. As a rule of thumb, create more movements daily that require impact to the bones. Weight training is another term that is associated with the prevention of Osteoporosis. When you use resistance activities to activate your muscles they become stronger and require your bones to work harder to support them. Weight training is fun and can be done as a group exercise. Look for a gym that holds classes that incorporate weight training exercises. Words that might be used would be circuit, strength, or flex. There are classes that include some aerobic exercise along with some strengthening movements. If you can find one of these; you can get weight bearing as well as weight training all in one class!! If you are not a joiner, then it might be very fun for you to do an exercise video at home or even put on a CD and dance around the house. No one said that you had to have a structured routine. Bones don't know what you are doing for impact they just know that they are being impacted and that's what makes them strong. Have fun with your exercise program. Vary it from day to day. Try not to get in a rut of doing the same thing over and over because your body (bones) gets used to doing whatever you ask of it and you need to shock your system every once in a while to get it to respond. Osteoporosis is no laughing matter. It is a very serious condition where your bones deteriorate and in extreme cases become lacy looking. I've known of cases where a bone is broken just by bending over and picking something up off the floor. Your doctor will go over your bone density test with you and he/she will let you know in which areas you need to be concerned. If your area of weakness is your low back, make sure that you do not do any spinal flexion (leaning forward from the hips). Try not to do any thing that would cause your lower back to support all your upper body weight in a bent over position. The added stress to the lumbar (low-back) vertebrae might cause some real damage. Another place that sometimes shows wear and tear is in the hip bone. It has been documented that when older people with osteoporosis of the hip fall and break their hip, many don't recover. Exercise and stressing the bones is the best way to prevent and reverse osteoporosis. You may read the term osteopenia. This is the beginning stages of osteoporosis. If you are diagnosed with osteopenia feel blessed that you caught it before it became a full fledged case of osteoporosis. Again, the best prescription for osteopenia and osteoporosis is strength training, weight bearing & impactive exercises. Do more standing, walking, jumping, dancing and playing than you do sitting. When the weather is good, go for a walk. Make a plan and stick to it. Include a walk after dinner every night. It might be hard to fit it in at first, but believe me, you'll become addicted and you will be so happy you took that first step!!

About the Author

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Source: <http://www.productsherbal.com>