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Stronger Muscles, Better Movement

Strength training is included in the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans for a good reason. You start losing muscle around age 30, and the rate of muscle loss accelerates when you reach your 50s. Some muscle loss is part of the aging process, but inactivity accounts for the rest.

Progressive strength training can prevent muscle loss and increase strength and bone density in adults and older adults. Walking and other types of aerobic activity provide many health benefits, but they don't make your muscles strong. Strength training does.

You can feel a difference when your body is stronger. Strengthening exercises also improve your balance, coordination, and agility, allowing you to perform everyday movements much easier. Do muscle-strengthening activities two to three days a week, with a "rest" day between. Work all major muscle groups, including the legs, hips, back, stomach, chest, shoulders, and arms.

Small Hops for Bone Health

Did you play hopscotch or jump rope when you were a child? It turns out these might be even better for your health as an adult than they were when you were young.

Regular physical activity will help keep bones strong and slow the rate of bone loss, even if you have fragile bones or osteoporosis. By leading an active lifestyle, you can significantly decrease your risk of falling and breaking a bone.

What type of exercise is good for your bones? The weight-bearing kind, which is anything that forces you to work against gravity. This type of exercise is effective because, as you put more tension on your muscles, it also puts more pressure, or stress, on your bones. Your body responds by creating fresh, new bone, resulting in greater bone strength.

Weight bearing exercise is anything that involves an impact with the floor or earth and requires your feet and legs to support you. Some examples include brisk walking, hiking, jogging, marching, climbing stairs, weight training, dancing, yoga, and tennis. Gardening can be weight bearing if you carry a water can, walk in your yard, etc.

Another way to build stronger bones is to jump, stomp, and hop. These activities jar your bones a little, sending a message that they need to get stronger. So, have a little fun and act like a child again!

A recent study, reported in the American Journal of Health Promotion, reveals that jumping 10 times/twice a day provides greater bone-building benefits than running or jogging. This is not recommended for anyone who has osteoporosis, but for those who want to be proactive with exercise, this is great news!

If hopping is too difficult, start with marching or doing heel drops. Make sure you warm up your muscles first by walking for a bit or marching in place.



Walk Kansas Learning Lounge

Webinar time: Wednesdays at 12:10p.m. (room opens at 12, noon)

April 15: Wiggle While You Work

April 29: Good Gut Health

May 6: Kindness at Work



Link to join or scan the QR code:
<https://ksu.zoom.us/j/92803723573>

All webinars will be recorded.

Marching with impact: This is basic marching where you push, or stomp, your feet on the ground.

Heel Drop: Hold onto something, about waist high, for stability. Rise up on your toes, then drop your heels down abruptly.

Power Hop: You can hop on both legs or, for maximum benefit, hop on one leg. Hold onto something for stability if needed. Bend your knees for cushion when you land — never land on straight knees. You can do the hops quickly or rest between each hop. Start with 10 and work up to 20 hops, twice daily. Learn how hopping can strengthen bones in this demonstration: [Hopping to Strengthen Bones](#)

Protect Yourself from Shingles: What You Need to Know

Shingles is a painful rash caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. Anyone who has had chickenpox earlier in life can develop shingles later on. That's because the virus stays in the body in an inactive form and can reactivate years or even decades later. Nearly 1 in 3 adults will get shingles at some point. The risk increases significantly after age 50, and you can get shingles more than once.

While shingles symptoms can be mild for some people, others may experience intense or long-lasting pain. In some cases, nerve pain can continue for months or even years. This pain can interfere with sleep, daily activities, and overall quality of life. Shingles often starts with burning, tingling, or sharp nerve pain followed by a blistering rash.

The good news is that shingles is preventable. The shingles vaccine is about 90 percent effective at preventing the disease. Most adults age 50 and older are encouraged to get vaccinated. The vaccine, called Shingrix, is given in two doses, typically 2 to 6 months apart. Getting both doses is important for strong and long-lasting protection.

Most insurance plans and Medicare Part D cover the shingles vaccine. If you are unsure whether the shingles vaccine is right for you, talk with your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

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This newsletter is developed by Sharolyn Flaming Jackson, Family and Consumer Sciences Specialist, K-State Extension

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Superfoods for Your Bones

Good nutrition is essential for bone health. Nothing beats calcium for your bones, and while you can get plenty of calcium from dairy foods, it is also found in vegetables. Dark leafy greens such as spinach, bok choy, collard, and turnip greens are superfoods for your bones. If it is difficult for you to get enough calcium from your diet, talk with your physician about taking a supplement.

Vitamin D is essential to help the body absorb calcium. Your body makes vitamin D when the sun shines directly on your skin, and it only takes 10 to 15 minutes of sunlight a couple of times a week to get what you need. As you age, though, your skin gets thinner and less efficient at synthesizing vitamin D from sunlight. A few foods, like salmon, contain calcium and vitamin D, and some are fortified with both, as well, including cereals and orange juice. Research continues to evolve on how much vitamin D you need; for many people, a supplement is a good idea.

Other minerals, like magnesium and potassium, help keep bones healthy. Magnesium helps with vitamin D balance in your body, and potassium aids in reducing calcium loss from bones. Good sources include spinach and other dark greens, potatoes, sweet potatoes, bananas, legumes, nuts, seeds, and whole grains.

Protein is a key nutrient for bone health at all stages of life. Most people get plenty of protein in their diets, but not everyone. Older adults often don't eat enough protein, which may harm bones. If you are considering eating more protein, consider plant sources too, such as nuts and beans. They offer calcium as well as protein!



Bok Choy Salad

Salad makes 4 servings; dressing makes approximately 8 servings

Bok choy is a type of Chinese cabbage, a leafy green vegetable with crisp white stalks and dark green leaves, widely used in Asian cuisine and valued for its mild, slightly sweet flavor and rich nutrient content.

Ingredients for Asian Salad Dressing:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- ½ teaspoon reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 clove minced garlic
- ½ tablespoon honey

Ingredients for Bok Choy Salad

- 4 cups sliced bok choy or other dark leafy greens
- ¼ cup roasted sliced almonds*
- ¼ cup sliced green onions (approximately 4)
- 10.5 ounce can mandarin oranges, drained

Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Prepare dressing: Place ingredients in a jar and shake well.
3. In a large salad bowl, combine the sliced bok choy, sliced green onions and Mandarin oranges. Add the toasted almonds. Pour half the prepared salad dressing over salad ingredients. Add more dressing to taste.

*To roast almonds: Preheat oven to 350°F. Spread the sliced almonds in a single layer on a baking sheet. Roast for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring halfway through to ensure even roasting.

Nutrition Information per serving for salad: 46 calories; 1.5 g total fat (0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat); 12 g carbohydrates; 8 g sugar; 2.5 g protein; 3.g fiber; 50 mg sodium.

Nutrition Information per serving for dressing: 50 calories; 5 g total fat (1 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat); 1 g carbohydrates; 1 g sugar; 0 g protein; 0 g fiber; 12 mg sodium.