

Bones need our support

By Ellen Waldman

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Do you ever think about your bones? Most of us don't, unless at some point, the doctor orders a bone density test and the results are less than stellar. Or maybe we've discovered by falling that our bones definitely can break, especially as we age. I thought I broke a bone in my foot a few months ago. The good news was that it was only a soft tissue injury. This was a wake-up call, since I already know I have osteoporosis and my bones might break more easily.

What to do about this? Diet, exercise, and supplements all sound like important components to address this diagnosis. Medications? There's an option to explore as well, but some medications have side effects that have a greater impact on the aging brain.

In the last year, I also found out about a different sort of approach to rebuild density back into bones. I got in touch with Patty Snow, who owns a business in Ashland called OsteoStrong (474 Russell St; <https://centers.osteostrong.me/osteostrong-ashland>; 541-841-6920; ashland@osteostrong.me) to hear her thoughts on building our bones as we age.

1. What happens to bones as people age?
From birth to about the age of 30, our bodies produce large amounts of osteoblasts which are the cells that build bone. We also produce osteoclasts which are responsible for breaking down older bone. This ensures that the new, strong bone is not being built on old, weaker bone. After the age of 30, we begin to produce more osteoclasts than osteoblasts and therefore our bones slowly begin to lose density throughout our lives. This is true for both men and women.
2. What are the problems related to aging bones?
As our bones weaken, our muscles also weaken and often we develop poor balance and posture. This combination leads to an increased risk of fractures.
3. What can people do to support good bone health?
Our bone health is affected by many factors: diet, life habits, genetics, gender and exercise. While genetics and gender at birth are out of our control, we can make sure our diet consists of calcium, vitamins D and K, and magnesium. Life habits, such as excessive drinking and smoking, can have a negative effect on our bones, while the proper amount of weight-bearing exercise can help bone strength.
4. How does OsteoStrong fit into the regimen of helping our bones?
OsteoStrong uses a process of osteogenic loading to help our members safely place the needed amount of pressure on their bones to trigger osteogenesis (the formation of new bone). Scientists have known for over 100 years that weight bearing exercise is needed to build new bone, but it has only been in the last 20 years that we have learned the amount of pressure needed. For the largest bones in our body, such as the legs and hips, it requires pressure equal to 4.2 multiples of a person's weight to trigger osteogenesis.
5. How did you get involved with this business?

I was diagnosed with osteoporosis in my early 40s. Through research, I learned about the side effects of the medications used for osteoporosis and decided I wanted a more natural solution. Regular exercise and diet modification didn't work, but in 2018 I learned about OsteoStrong. I was highly skeptical of the claim that it only took 15 minutes once a week to strengthen bones, but after doing considerable research, I understood how it works. We love Ashland and wanted to make it our home, but the nearest OsteoStrong was in Bend. That's when my wife, Kim, and I decided to open our own center in May 2020. I am excited to share that after a year of sessions, my bone density improved 16% and I no longer have osteoporosis!

If you've spent any time at all thinking about your bones, this just might be something to consider adding to your regimen. Support your bones and your bones will support you.