Keeping Your Spine Safe With Osteoporosis

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Moving Safely With Osteoporosis

Many people who suffer from osteoporosis experience spinal problems, but they often are unaware of these problems until serious problems occur. Knowing more about the spine and what kinds of exercises are most beneficial in protecting the spine can help prevent further injury to it. Knowledge of the spine is essential to your understanding of osteoporosis.

The spine is made up of small bones called vertebrae, and people with osteoporosis usually break bones in their upper or thoracic spine. When these small bones break, this causes problems such as pain, height loss and/or hunched posture. Breaking multiple bones in the spine can cause a phenomenon known as kyphosis, which is when the spine curves forward. Kyphosis can cause constant pain in some people, so people need to take steps to protect their spine.

Protecting the Spine

The first step to protecting the spine involves knowing how to move properly and safely during exercise. Osteoporosis causes a weakening of the bones, but through proper and safe exercise, this effect can be lessened. People with weak spinal vertebrae should not partake in physical activities that could lead to broken bones. This includes lifting items that are too heavy, bending forward from the waist, extreme twisting of the spine and many other issues. To prevent damage to the spine, exercises that increase strength to the muscles around your spine can help strengthen your spinal column.

Exercising the Spine

There are many ways to exercise the spine to prevent bones from weakening to the point of breaking. One way to do that is to strengthen the muscles that keep the spine straight and erect, and these muscles run along either side of the spine. However, whenever exercising with osteoporosis, it is important not to flex or bend the spine forward because it can cause more stress on the spine. The compression caused by bending forward causes more breaks in the bone.

Bending the spine backward, though, can help to alleviate some of the stress on the bones of the spine because it separates the vertebrae in the spine, lessening the chance of a broken bone. In addition, it may also be helpful to improve posture when suffering from osteoporosis. Doing stretches like standing backbends can help to increase the flexibility of the spine and strengthen the muscles in and around the spine increasing good posture.

When exercising with osteoporosis, perhaps the key to ensuring broken bones do not occur in the spine is maintaining the correct form. Utilizing the leg muscles can help to take pressure off the spine when lifting, pushing, or pulling anything. Moreover, when walking, keeping the head high, the shoulder blades slightly pinched and the abdomen pulled in is an important method in ensuring the spine does not have too much pressure placed on it.

Protecting Your Backbone

No matter what exercise or motion a person with osteoporosis does, you should remember not to over-exert the spine in any way that will further weaken the structure of the vertebrae. To prevent osteoporosis, it is helpful to maintain a healthy lifestyle throughout life, including practicing weight-bearing exercise and having a balanced diet.