# Eating the Best Bone-building Foods to Slow Osteoporosis

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## Bone Building Foods

It is no surprise that the foods you eat and drink have a direct impact on your physical health and well-being. Often, though, the relationship is relatively weak, but with a condition like osteoporosis, the foods you eat can drastically impact the disease.

Because of this strong relationship, anyone at risk of osteoporosis should understand the influence of food on their condition and take practical steps towards adjusting their diet.

### Building a Better Osteoporosis Understanding

Many people understand the basics elements of osteoporosis but developing a fuller grasp of the condition can be essential to fighting back against its progression. People may consider bones to be mostly stable and unchanging, but the skeletal system is in a constant state of building and breakdown.

The building and breakdown relationship through childhood and early adulthood is one-sided as the body devotes tremendous resources to building and strengthening bones. During a person’s late 20s or early 30s, the balance shifts, and the body begins to breakdown more bone than it builds.

Depending on the reserve of strong bones built in early life and the speed of the breakdown, the loss of bone health could happen slowly or quite rapidly. When bone loss is significant, a person with osteoporosis is at risk of ill effects including pain, increased limitations, and breaks from minor falls.

### Managing Osteoporosis with Foods

Osteoporosis is a progressive condition, which means that with time, the condition will worsen and eventually lead to devastating effects. The good news is that there are many helpful strategies a person can employ to slow the progression and minimize the unwanted impact of osteoporosis.

Your doctor will discuss the medical interventions available to treat osteoporosis. Options include medications, supplements, and injections. One drawback of these options is that they may require long-term use to spark the desired outcomes. Worse, some treatments will produce unwanted side effects that make treatment feel less beneficial.

Regardless of the osteoporosis stage, adjusting your diet to consume more bone-healthy foods, like those containing calcium and vitamin D, can limit the effects of the disease and improve your overall well-being. As always, consult with your doctor before making any drastic changes to your diet.

### Foods to Avoid with Osteoporosis

Before talking about bone building foods, it is even more valuable to discuss the foods and drinks to avoid. No matter how healthy your diet is, consuming certain foods and drinks can completely derail your efforts.

To ensure a bone-healthy diet, avoid the following:

- **Salty foods**: Eating too much salt will encourage the body to lose calcium, so no matter how much calcium you consume, the excess salt will push it out of the system.
- **Wheat bran**: Interestingly, it seems that wheat bran, when eaten at the same time as calcium, will block the absorption of the needed nutrient. For example, wheat bran cereal may negate the calcium in milk.
- **Alcohol**: Consuming alcohol in moderation seems fine, but those who consume more than three drinks per day may notice some bone loss.
- **Caffeine**: Like alcohol, it appears that the caffeine in coffee, tea, and sodas can block the absorption of calcium throughout the day.

**Foods with Hard-to-Absorb Calcium**

Calcium is fundamental to healthy bones, but with some foods, it is challenging for the body to absorb the mineral. For example, spinach contains a good amount of calcium, but since it is also high in oxalic acid, the body struggles to use the calcium.

This issue is also present in foods like:

- **Rhubarb**
- **Beets**
- **Green beans**

A similar situation presents with beans. Beans contain a wide variety of healthy nutrients as well as substances called phytates. The problem is that phytates decrease the body’s ability to use calcium effectively.

These foods are still important in a healthy diet, though they cannot be counted on a source of calcium.

**The Best Bone-Building Foods**

For people interested in seeking out the finest bone building foods to maintain or rebuild their bone health, these are your best bets:

- **Dairy products**, especially milk, yogurt and cheeses: these foods all contain calcium, and many have vitamin D as well.
- **Fish**: canned fish, such as sardines and salmon with bones, offer calcium, while mackerel, tuna, salmon and sardines have plenty of vitamin D.
- **Fruits and vegetables**: broccoli and kale both provide calcium, and many other vegetables also offer helpful nutrients like magnesium, potassium, vitamin C and vitamin K. Trying to fit a variety of fruits and veggies into your diet can help ensure a balance of nutrition.

Of course, changing your diet may not be enough to significantly improve or prevent the onset of osteoporosis, but it may go far in helping the fight against the disease. By implementing a changed diet combined with other medical treatments, you can shrink the negative impact of osteoporosis in your life.