3 Natural Treatments for Osteoporosis

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Natural Treatment for Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a silent disease — silent because unless you have been screened by your physician, there is no real way of knowing you have it until the unthinkable happens, such as a broken bone. Once you find out you have osteoporosis, you begin a lifelong maintenance routine — vitamin D, calcium, medications to preserve bone and perhaps even build a little bit of bone. Exercise routines if your doctor deems that you are physically able and safe to do so may be recommended too. Natural treatment for osteoporosis can work too.

1. Dietary Modifications

We've all heard the old adage, "You are what you eat." This may be true in regards to osteoporosis; people with certain dietary habits earlier in life are prone to osteoporosis later in life. Some of these unhealthy diet habits are:

- High sodium intake.
- High animal protein intake.
- Coffee intake greater than two cups per day.
- Low intake of fruits and vegetables.
- Excessive intake of alcohol.
- Low intake of calcium and vitamin D.

If you had these dietary habits in your younger years and now have osteoporosis, it isn't too late to change your habits! Although it won't change the outcome (you already have osteoporosis, after all), you may be able to slow your bone loss.

Here are some tips on changing up your diet and eating for bone health:

- **Eat more calcium.** Calcium can be found in dairy products, green leafy vegetables, such as broccoli and kale, soy products like soy milk and tofu and foods that have been fortified with calcium, such as orange juice and cereals.
- **Reduce sodium intake.** Keep the salt shaker away from your plate, and use salt substitutes while cooking. Avoid processed and fast foods, all of which have lots of sodium.
- **Increase your intake of produce.** Produce is rich in vitamins and minerals that are thought to help with bone growth. These vitamins and minerals include potassium, magnesium, beta-carotene and vitamin C.
- **Limit caffeine and alcohol intake.** Coffee intake should be limited to no more than two cups per day. Alcohol should be avoided completely or consumed in moderation.

Keep in mind that these tips are basic guidelines — your individual needs should be discussed with your physician or a dietician, especially if you have other health conditions that may change your dietary needs.

2. Supplements

By now you are probably already taking vitamin D and calcium supplements. Several other supplements are showing potential in either promoting bone growth or preventing bone loss.

Boron

This element is naturally-occurring in the body and is found in highest concentrations in the bones and teeth. It is thought to be important for bone health because it promotes absorption of calcium, phosphorus and magnesium.

Supplementing with boron may be especially helpful for people who are known to be deficient in vitamin D, potassium or magnesium. Although boron can be ingested with food sources, such as fruits, vegetables, soybeans and nuts, it can also be taken as a supplement, which is a more reliable source — a safe daily dose is thought to be anywhere from 1 milligram to 10 milligrams daily.

Breast cancer patients should discuss the use of boron and dosing with their physicians.

Strontium

This element is found in trace amounts in the human body. We ingest it in small amounts through our food and water.

Recent studies have shown that the use of strontium ranelate can reduce fractures significantly compared to the control group because it increased bone mineral density. In the U.S., strontium citrate is available as opposed to strontium ranelate, and research is still pending to see if it is as effective as strontium ranelate.

Isoflavones

Isoflavones are found in soy products. According to the Natural Medicine Journal, “Diets high in soy may decrease bone reabsorption in postmenopausal women.”

Ipriflavone is a semi-synthetic flavone that is currently being researched. In rats, it did not increase bone density but did increase bone remodeling.

Ingesting soy foods may also be helpful. For example, drinking 2 to 4 ounces of soy milk per day may have positive effects. Soy is known to be allergenic, so this may not be an option for every person.

The use of nutrition and supplements is still medicine and should be discussed with your doctor, especially if you have other health conditions.

3. Essential Oils

We’ve been using supplements for centuries (maybe longer) to treat our ailments. But what about essential oils? Undoubtedly, you have heard of essential oils, and you probably have a friend or two who touts the benefits on Instagram or Facebook. Maybe you have even dabbled yourself! But can they really help to treat osteoporosis?

DoTERRA describes an essential oil as a naturally occurring aroma that occurs from the seeds, bark, flowers, stems and other parts of the flower of a plant. According to doTERRA, “essential oils have long been used for food preparation, beauty treatment, and health-care practices.”

Are Essential Oils Effective?

Essential oils have been used for thousands of years. There is plenty of documentation to support this claim. For example, there are reports of ancient Egyptians applying oils to their bodies with botanical extracts.

Although the oils have been used for many years, that doesn’t mean they are necessarily effective — or does it? Well, there is growing evidence to support the use of essential oils as medicine. But, it also depends on the oil

and what you are using it for. For example, lavender and tea tree oil have been shown to kill fungi and bacteria. Menthol in peppermint and can provide a cooling sensation, which can suppress a cough. Clove oil can be numbing, which can act as a local anesthetic.

There are a lot of people who use essential oils for mood enhancement, but the research is lacking in this area.

Are Essential Oils Safe?

The safety of essential oils depends on several factors:

- **Is the essential oil that is being used high-quality?** Some essential oils that are sold are not pure, authentic oils. These are more likely to cause safety issues.
- **Does the oil contain aldehydes (citronella, citral) or phenols (cinnamic aldehyde, eugenol)?** These oils can be diluted before application to prevent an allergic reaction.
- **Is the oil being applied safely?** Each oil has a safe method of application, in addition to a safe amount that should be applied. Click here for direction on safe application of oils.
- **How is the health of your skin?** Essential oils generally shouldn't be applied to skin that is damaged or diseased, although there are some exceptions.

Specific Oils for Osteoporosis

If you would like to try some oils for the treatment of osteoporosis, here are a few you can try!

Krill Essential Oil
This oil is chock-full of omega-3 fatty acids, EPA and DHA. This incredible concoction means that it may help your bones and joints maintain their strength. Krill essential oil may also be able to help repair unhealthy and cracked bones.

Wintergreen Essential Oil
This contains methyl salicylate and salicylic acid. This combination allows it to have a cooling effect on the skin when applied topically, meaning that it may promote a reduction in bone pain due to osteoporosis. It has a strong aroma, which also promotes focus.

Wintergreen essential oil may also help to heal your bones. Apply it (using the instructions from the link listed above) and you may be on the way to healed bones, as well as a focused mind and a reduction in pain.

Peppermint and Eucalyptus Essential Oil Blend
This does not directly promote bone healing, but the combination of the two together have a cooling affect that promotes a reduction in pain. Many essential oil companies will have a blend of these two oils, but you can also buy the oils separately and blend them together yourself.

These two oils separately have analgesic qualities. Blending them together packs the analgesic power punch, so make sure that you blend them safely. If you choose to blend them yourself, mix 5 to 10 drops of each oil in a dark glass bottle, then add three spoons of a carrier oil. You can then add a drop or two of this combination directly to the affected area as needed.

The Bottom Line

Choosing to treat your osteoporosis with natural remedies should be discussed with your physician. Treating osteoporosis solely with natural remedies may depend on the degree of your condition.

You may also be able to include some of these remedies with medications that your physician has prescribed. Remember, you should not discontinue medications that your physician has prescribed in favor of supplements or essential oils without discussing it with your physician, as this article is not a replacement for medical advice.