Weight-Bearing Exercise

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Weight-Bearing Exercise for Osteoporosis

You shouldn't be intimidated by exercise if you have osteoporosis. In fact, it is the best thing for you. Surprised? Many studies support the fact that weight-bearing exercise over time can help increase bone mass and strengthen bones. You will also benefit with weight training because it will increase your balance and coordination, crucial in keeping you from falling and obtaining fractures.

Weight-bearing Exercises

You will need to do weight-bearing exercises to increase the strength of your bones. Exercises like these require you to move against gravity while being upright. High-impact weight-bearing exercises may not be a good idea if you are just starting out or you are highly susceptible to bone fractures. These exercises include:

- Jogging
- Running
- Stair climbing
- Dancing
- Jump rope
- High-intensity aerobics

The low-impact weight-bearing exercises are safe for anyone to do, especially if you have had bone fractures from osteoporosis in the past. These activities include:

- Stair stepping machines
- Low-impact machines
- Treadmill
- Walking on a flat surface
- Elliptical machines

The Benefits

When you do weight-bearing exercise, it is working the bones of your spine and lower body. The stress placed on these bones from the activity stimulates them to utilize more nutrients from your body to strengthen these bones. The spine and lower body are designed to support your weight, so weight-bearing exercise is what works these bones. Mowing the lawn and pushing the vacuum cleaner is even considered weight-bearing exercises. Resistance exercises have been found to build bone density in the spine.

If you have trouble getting up from a chair, calisthenics is a good way to improve this movement. You could stand up and sit down repetitiously until you tire. The more you are able to do this and increase the number of times you can do it in a session, the better. Always consult your doctor before starting any exercise program.

You will need to work out regularly for about six months to a year before you will see results with bone mass. If you quit working out, any progress for building bone mass would be lost. Working out to maintain or build bone mass will be a life-long commitment if you want to have healthy bones that will not become brittle. A combination of weight-bearing exercise and resistance training is the best way to protect your bones. You can work with a physical therapist to determine the best exercises for your situation. Exercises like swimming or riding a bike, while good for your heart, will not do anything for your bones.

A diet that supports bone health would be a great addition to any exercise program you decide to partake in. Calcium, vitamin D, and other nutrients are essential in keeping your bones strong. If your doctor has prescribed medication for your osteoporosis, continue to take it. Do not go off of it without his/her consent.