

Patient Name _____
 Dietitian _____
 Phone _____
 E-mail _____

Some habits also make your risk of bone loss higher:

- Little or no exercise
- Low body weight
- Smoking
- Drinking too much alcohol

If you change your habits, you can lower your risk.

Tips for Bone Health

Make sure you have enough calcium in your diet.

Calcium is a mineral that helps build strong bones. A diet low in calcium may lower the density of your bones. This can lead to bone loss.

Your body also needs calcium for normal muscle function. A diet rich in calcium may also help prevent high blood pressure and lower the risk of colon cancer. Check with your health care team to find out whether you need more calcium.

How Much Calcium Do You Need?	
Age	Daily Calcium Intake
9-18	1,300 mg
19-50	1,000 mg
Men 51+	1,000 mg
Women 51+	1,200 mg
Women after menopause	1,500 mg

Women need more calcium after menopause.

During and after menopause, the body produces less estrogen. Estrogen helps the body absorb calcium. After menopause, women need 1,500 mg of calcium daily to keep their bones strong. Eating calcium-rich foods and taking calcium supplements will help you get the right amount.

What is osteoporosis?

The loss of bone tissue is called osteoporosis. It causes weak bones and raises the risk for breaking bones.

Bone loss can occur for many years before you have symptoms. You may not know you have bone loss until you break a bone.

Am I at risk for bone loss?

Some cancer patients have a high risk of bone loss:

- Women who take drugs that block estrogen
- Women who have menopause brought on by chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or surgery
- Men with prostate cancer who take drugs that block hormone production
- Patients with cancer that has spread to the bones

Other factors can also raise the risk of bone loss:

- Being a female over age 65
- Family history of bone loss or bone fractures not caused by serious accidents
- History of missing menstrual cycles
- Having gone through menopause
- History of low calcium and low vitamin D in diet
- Some thyroid and arthritis conditions

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Eat foods rich in calcium. Your body absorbs calcium best if you eat calcium-rich foods throughout the day.

- Dairy: milk, yogurt, and cheese
- Vegetables: dark, leafy greens such as spinach and kale
- Legumes: beans, peas, and lentils
- Other foods: almonds, tofu processed with calcium, sardines, and calcium-fortified foods such as cereal or orange juice

Ask your cancer care team whether you need a calcium supplement. Calcium is best absorbed from food. However, if you are not eating enough calcium in your diet, supplements help you get the calcium you need to keep strong bones.

Supplements contain different forms of calcium. If you are taking calcium carbonate, it is best to take it with a meal. Calcium citrate may be taken with or without a meal. To get the most from either type of calcium, take no more than 500 mg at a time.

Ask your cancer care team about vitamin D, too. Vitamin D is also important for building and keeping strong bones. Most adults require 800–1,000 international units (IU) of vitamin D daily.

It is important to eat foods rich in vitamin D. Fish, cheese, eggs, mushrooms, and butter are foods high in vitamin D. Milk, some breads and cereals, and many calcium supplements have vitamin D added—check the label. If your cancer care team thinks you are not getting enough vitamin D from what you eat, they may recommend a supplement.

Quit smoking and avoid drinking too much alcohol. Smoking increases bone loss, and so does drinking too much alcohol. Generally, moderate use of alcohol is considered one drink per day for women, two drinks per day for men.

Maintain a healthy weight and exercise often. Being underweight makes your risk for osteoporosis higher. Improve your muscle and bone strength with exercises such as walking, running, or weight training. Check with your doctor before changing your exercise plan.

Find out if you need medicines to prevent or limit bone loss. Talk with your doctor about drugs that can help.

Set nutrition goals for calcium and vitamin D. The tables on page 3 show foods that are good sources of calcium and vitamin D. There's a worksheet to help you plan ways to include the right amounts of them in your diet.

The dietitians of the Linda B. and Robert B. Wiggins
Wellness and Integrative Health Center
can help you meet your nutrition goals.

The Wellness Center is open Monday–Friday, 7 a.m.–6 p.m.

801-587-4585

www.huntsmancancer.org/wellness

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Good Sources of Calcium

Food	Calcium
8 ounces milk, soy milk, or orange juice with added calcium	285-300 mg
8 ounces yogurt	350-450 mg
1 ounce cheese	115-200 mg
8 ounces calcium-added cereal or bread	200-300 mg
1 cup dark-green, leafy vegetables	50-100 mg
1 ounce nuts and seeds	25-75 mg
3 ounces canned salmon	235 mg
3 ounces canned mackerel	205 mg
1.75 ounces canned sardines	130 mg

Good Sources of Vitamin D

Food	Vitamin D
8 ounces milk, soy milk, or orange juice with added calcium	100 IU
8 ounces yogurt	80 IU
3 ounces cooked salmon	440 IU
3 ounces canned salmon	400 IU
3 ounces canned tuna	150 IU
3 ounces cooked halibut	510 IU
3 ounces cooked catfish	425 IU
3 ounces canned mackerel	300 IU
1.75 ounces canned sardines	250 IU

I am age _____ so I need _____ mg of calcium each day. I can get that by eating these foods:

I need 800 to 1,000 IU of vitamin D each day. I can get that by eating these foods:
