Next, get regular check-ups from your doctor, and take good care of yourself:

- Have your eyes checked every year for vision changes, cataracts, glaucoma and other eye problems.
- Have your hearing checked every two years, or anytime you or others think that you can’t hear well.
- See your doctor if you have foot pain or corns, or if you can’t trim your toenails well. Sore feet could make you fall.
- See your doctor right away if you feel dizzy, weak or unsteady on your feet, if you feel confused, or if you fall.
- Let your doctor know if a medication is making you feel dizzy or making you lose your balance.
- If your doctor wants you to use a cane or a walker, learn how to use it properly and then use it all the time.
- When you get up from bed during the night or in the morning, sit on the side of the bed for a minute or two before you stand up. This will give your blood pressure time to adjust, and you will feel less dizzy.
- If you need to go to the bathroom often at night, consider using a bedside commode.

Keep your body in good shape to help avoid falls:

- Get regular exercise, including strength training.
- Don’t smoke.
- Limit your alcohol intake to two drinks or less a day.

What can my family do to help me prevent falls?

- Your family can help you check your home for dangers that might make you trip or fall. They can help make your home safer for you.
- Someone in your family can take a walk with you to see how stable you are. Your family can also watch for changes in your strength or balance.
- Your family can respond to any worries you might have about feeling dizzy, weak or unsteady, and they can see that you get help.

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians

The Partnership for BCM

Purpose

The Partnership is organized as an association of volunteers committed to the purpose of supporting Baylor College of Medicine through Advocacy, Philanthropic Support and Fundraising Support activities, working independently or with other College Support Groups.

Mission

The Purpose of the Partnership is achieved through its Mission of:

A. Advocacy – Acting as knowledgeable Goodwill Ambassadors for the College, to inform the citizens and organizations of our community, state and country of the activities of the College, including medical education, medical research, patient care and community outreach programs.

B. Philanthropic Support - Assist the College with identification, cultivation and solicitation of major, annual and planned gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations.

C. Fundraising Support – Serve as a fundraising organization by sponsoring selected fundraising events to support priority projects as proposed by the College.

To join or to learn more about The Partnership, please visit our website at www.bcm.edu/advancement/partnership or call 713-798-3160.

Brendan Lee, M.D., Ph.D.

Brendan Lee, M.D., Ph.D., is professor of molecular and human genetics at Baylor College of Medicine. He is also chief of the Skeletal Dysplasia Clinic at Texas Children’s Hospital, which is a genetics clinic that provides diagnosis, treatment and follow-up care for patients from birth to adulthood with abnormalities of skeletal growth and strength. Dr. Lee belongs to an elite group of scientists with the title of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator. He was one of 12 physician-scientists chosen in 2002 as part of a new HHS initiative to fund translational research. He is interested in the consequences of gene mutations on craniofacial and limb development. To understand these consequences, he conducts studies on tissue and organ development with clinical research in patients who have skeletal malformations. He is also the director of the Rollanette and Berdon Lawrence Bone Disease Program of Texas, a collaborative research, clinical and education program of Baylor College of Medicine and The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Established in 2002, the program seeks to improve basic and translational research of bone diseases and to convert basic science findings to more effective treatment and prevention options.

Bone Mass Measurement: What the Numbers Mean

A bone mineral density (BMD) test is the best way to determine your bone health. The test can identify osteoporosis, determine your risk for broken bones, and measure your response to osteoporosis treatment. The most widely recognized BMD test is called a dual energy’s X-ray absorptiometry, or DXA test. This painless test measures bone density at your hip and spine.

A DXA test measures your bone mineral density and compares it to that of an established norm or standard to give you a score. You can interpret this score as follows:

- T-score: Most commonly, your DXA test results are compared to the ideal or peak bone mineral density of a healthy 30-year-old adult, and you are given a T-score. A score of 0 means your BMD is at the ideal level for your age.

Risk factors you can control

- Diet. Be sure to get enough calcium and Vitamin D.
- Physical activity. Incorporate plenty of exercise into your lifestyle. Like muscles, bones become stronger—and stronger—with regular exercise.
- Body weight. Being too thin makes you more likely to get osteoporosis.
- Smoking. Smoking cigarettes can keep your body from using the calcium in your diet. Also, women who smoke go through menopause earlier than those who don’t smoke. These things can increase your risk for osteoporosis.
- Alcohol. People who drink a lot are more likely to get osteoporosis.
- Medicines. Certain medicines can cause bone loss, including glucocorticoids. These are given to people who have arthritis, asthma, and many other diseases. Some other medicines that prevent seizures and that treat endometriosis and cancer can cause bone loss too.

Risk factors you cannot control

- Age. Your chances of getting osteoporosis increase as you get older.
- Gender. You have a greater chance of getting osteoporosis if you are a woman. Women have smaller bones than men and lose bone faster than men do because of hormone changes that happen after menopause.
- Ethnicity. White women and Asian women are most likely to get osteoporosis.

For more information about The Partnership for Baylor College of Medicine, call 713-798-5460 or visit our website at www.bcm.edu/advancement/partnership.
Calculus and Vitamin D important for strong bones

The foods we eat contain a variety of vitamins, minerals, and other important nutrients that help keep our bodies healthy. Two nutrients in particular, calcium and vitamin D, are needed for strong bones.

To find out how much calcium you need, see the Recommended Calcium Intakes (in milligrams) chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calcium Intakes Life-stage group</th>
<th>mg/day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infants 0 to 6 months</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infants 6 to 12 months</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 years old</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 8 years old</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 13 years old</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 to 18 years old</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 30 years old</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 50 years old</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 70-year-old males</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 70-year-old females</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 years old</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 to 18 years old, pregnant/lactating</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 50 years old, pregnant/lactating</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences, 2010.

You can incorporate more calcium in your diet without adding much fat by eating calcium-rich foods, including:

- Fatty foods: low-fat natural cheeses such as Cheddar and provolone
- Fortified food: milk, orange juice, fortified with calcium (check labels)
- Green vegetables: broccoli, kale, bok choy
- Nuts: almonds, peanuts, walnuts
- Seeds: sesame, flax
- Seafood:
  - Salmon
  - Oysters
  - Sardines
  - Tofu

Bone Health continued from cover

- Family history. Having a close family member who has osteoporosis or has broken a bone may also increase your risk.

Since osteoporosis does not have any symptoms until a bone breaks, it is important to talk to your doctor about your bone health. If your doctor feels that you are at risk for osteoporosis, he or she may order you a bone density test. A bone density test measures how strong or dense—your bones are and whether you have osteoporosis. It can also tell you what your chances are of breaking a bone. Bone density tests are quick, safe, and painless.

What can I do for my bone health

It is never too early or too late to take care of your bones. The following steps can help you improve your bone health.

- Eat a well-balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D. Get plenty of physical activity. Like muscles, bones become stronger with exercise.
  - The best exercises for healthy bones are strength-building and weight-bearing, like walking, climbing stairs, lifting weights, and dancing. Try to get 30 minutes of exercise each day.
  - Live a healthy lifestyle. Don’t smoke, and, if you choose to drink alcohol, don’t drink too much.
  - Talk to your doctor about your bone health. Go over your risk factors with your doctor and ask if you should get a bone density test. If you have osteoporosis, your doctor can order medicine to help prevent bone loss and reduce your chances of breaking a bone.
  - Prevent falls. Falling down can cause a bone to break, especially in someone with osteoporosis.

Will I need medicine?

There are medicines to help prevent and treat osteoporosis. Your doctor may want you to take medicine if your bone density test shows that your bones are weak and that you have a good chance of breaking a bone in the future. Your doctor is more likely to order medicine if you have other health concerns that increase your risk for breaking a bone, such as a tendency to fall or a low body weight.

Source: National Institutes of Health

Preventing falls

Falls are the top cause of accidents in people over the age of 65, causing serious injuries such as broken bones and even death.

The normal changes of aging, like poor eyesight or poor balance, can make you more likely to fall. Illnesses and physical conditions can affect your strength and balance. Poor lighting or throw rugs in your home can make you more likely to trip or slip. In some cases, overprescribing medicines can upset your balance and make you fall.

Medicines for depression, sleep problems and high blood pressure often cause falls. Some medicines for diabetes and heart conditions can also make you unsteady on your feet.

You may be more likely to fall if you are taking four or more medicines. You are also likely to fall if you have changed your medicine within the past two weeks.

Conditions like osteoporosis may make your bones even more likely to break if you do fall.

Here are some tips on how to stay safe in your home and avoid falls:

- Wear shoes with nonskid soles (not house slippers).
- Be sure your home is well lit so that you can see things you might trip over.
- Use night lights in your bedroom, bathroom, hallways and stairways.
- Remove throw rugs or fasten them to the floor with carpet tape. Tuck down carpet edges.
- Don’t put electrical cords across pathways.
- Have grab bars put in your bathtub, shower and toilet area.
- Have handrails put on both sides of stairways.
- Don’t climb on stools and stepladders. Get someone else to help with jobs that call for climbing.
- Don’t wax your floors at all, or use a non-skid wax.
- Have side rails and walkways repaired so that surfaces are smooth and even.

Bone Mass continued from cover

equal to the norm for a healthy young adult. Differences between the BMD and the lower your risk of fracture.

World Health Organization Definitions Based on Bone Density Levels

- Normal bone density is within 1 SD (+1 or -1) of the young adult mean.
- Low bone mass bone density is between 1 and 2 SD below the young adult mean (-1 to -2.5 SD).
- Osteoporosis bone density is 2.5 SD or more below the young adult mean (-2.5 SD or lower).

It is never too early or too late to take care of your bones. The following steps can help you improve your bone health.

- Eat a well-balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D. Get plenty of physical activity. Like muscles, bones become stronger with exercise.
  - The best exercises for healthy bones are strength-building and weight-bearing, like walking, climbing stairs, lifting weights, and dancing. Try to get 30 minutes of exercise each day.
  - Live a healthy lifestyle. Don’t smoke, and, if you choose to drink alcohol, don’t drink too much.
  - Talk to your doctor about your bone health. Go over your risk factors with your doctor and ask if you should get a bone density test. If you have osteoporosis, your doctor can order medicine to help prevent bone loss and reduce your chances of breaking a bone.
  - Prevent falls. Falling down can cause a bone to break, especially in someone with osteoporosis.

Z Score

Some bones in your body are used for calculating your Z score and your T score.

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