

WOMEN'S HEALTH

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Editorial Note:

Dear Doctor,

It's our immense pleasure to inform you that we have published our newsletter, "Women's Health". In this issue we are focusing on The Benefits of Exercise in Postmenopausal Women and Calcium Supplements Linked to Longer Lifespan in Women.

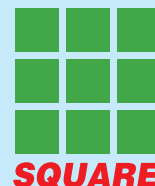
Hope these are enriched your knowledge. Your comments and suggestions will enrich our upcoming issues. Please participate in quiz competition and win prizes.

✿
The Benefits of Exercise in
Postmenopausal Women

✿
Calcium Supplements Linked to
Longer Lifespan in Women
✿



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The Benefits of Exercise in Postmenopausal Women

Exercising After Menopause

Exercise is longlife activity and in menopause it becomes especially important as postmenopausal women have to face a variety of health issues. Activities that improve balance, strength and cardiac health will help to ensure better health as we age.

Why Exercise is Important for Postmenopausal Women

- Exercise helps to prevent osteoporosis by keeping bone and cartilage tissue strong and healthy.
- It reduces the risk of heart attack and other cardiovascular diseases by increasing heart and respiratory rates.
- It keeps your joints moving and keeps the muscles around your joints strong. This helps in the prevention of arthritis.
- It will help to maintain regular bowel function, a common problem as people become older.
- Ultimately it will improve a women's overall health and fitness by controlling weight, making the heart stronger and retaining a sense of well-being and alertness.

Exercise Helps Prevent Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a decrease in bone mineral density. Weight-bearing exercises are essential in preventing osteoporosis. These exercises cause weight to be placed on the bones, especially the hips, legs and spine. The weight placed on the bone helps slow deterioration of the bone.

Good Exercises for Postmenopausal Women

- Experts agree that walking is the best form of exercise for postmenopausal women. It can be done anywhere, at anytime and promotes social interaction.



- Light weight training will help build muscle mass and keep muscles tone.

- Low-impact aerobics is great for increasing heart and respiratory rates, which helps keep vital organs healthy.
- General activity is also urged. Older women should go outside or work in the garden.

Exercise should be done daily for at least 30 minutes. If not, then at least three times a week. Remember, Any activity is better than no activity.

Other Preventive Measures

Exercise does not work alone. Postmenopausal women need to do the following to ensure proper health:

- Have a calcium intake of at least 1,500 milligrams a day to help build strong bones.
- Limit daily fat and cholesterol intake to help prevent cardiovascular disease.
- Maintain a normal body weight for their height.
- Do not smoke. Smoking increases the chance for cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis.

Suggestions for Postmenopausal Women and Exercise

- Women should consult their doctor when starting a new exercise program. She can evaluate her medical history and help set up an exercise program.
- Women should pick an exact date of when they would like to start exercising and stick to it.
- Women should ask a friend or family member to join them in their exercise program.
- Women should drink six to eight glasses of water a day. If exercising in a hot environment, drink 10 to 12 glasses a day.
- Women should monitor their calorie intake.
- In the event of uncommon pain or discomfort in any joint, muscle or tendon, women should stop and consult their doctor.
- Women should not exercise right before bed - it may cause trouble with sleeping.

Exercise Your Way through Menopause

Menopause is a term that means you've had your last menstrual cycle or period. This typically occurs between the ages of 48 and 55. Prior to that time women notice gradual changes in the frequency, regularity or amount of their menstrual flow.

One's flow normally becomes lighter and the interval longer between each period. Cycle length may also become shorter or erratic. This is due to progressive reductions in estrogen during the 5 to 10 years leading up to menopause.

Menopause can be accompanied by a number of physical changes or symptoms including hot flashes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, sleep disturbances and emotional ups and downs. Many women experience only mild symptoms; others have more difficulty. In the years following menopause, risk for various health problems such as heart disease and osteoporosis increases.

Can exercise eliminate or reduce some of the symptoms of menopause?

Some research suggests that women who are physically active may have fewer and milder vasomotor symptoms (including hot flashes, night sweats, sleep disturbances) than sedentary women. Other research shows no effect. Menopause is a time of transition often coinciding with other life changes (body, family structure, relationships, job, self-identity). Exercise has a significant and positive impact on mood and has been shown to be particularly helpful in the treatment of mild to moderate depression. Exercise in the morning has been shown to be helpful in improving sleep, whereas too much evening exercise may increase difficulty sleeping.

Can exercise reverse or prevent any of the physical changes occurring as a result of menopause?

Exercise has no influence on what age you experience menopause. (Smokers go through menopause earlier than non-smokers, so that's a good reason to quit the habit.)



Many women claim they gain weight during or after menopause (especially in their abdominal region). Many studies have found that weight gain after menopause is more likely in women who are sedentary than in women who maintain a physically active lifestyle. Exercise appears to have a more powerful influence on a women's total body fat and abdominal fat during early menopause than hormone replacement therapy.

If a woman does gain weight during her postmenopausal years, the pattern of fat deposition will probably look different. This is because a woman's sex hormones seem to promote the "pear" shape instead of the "apple" shape. A woman who has always deposited fat in her hips and thighs may find that she now gains fat in her abdominal region and waist. Unfortunately, this switch to abdominal and visceral (inside around your organs) fat storage is associated

with increased heart disease and diabetes risk. So it really pays to find activities you enjoy that keep your body fit and your waist trim.

Estrogen appears to confer a "protective effect" on women when it comes to diseases such as osteoporosis and heart disease. When estrogen levels drop, women become more vulnerable to these health problems. Exercise can step in and provide its own "protective effect". The five years following menopause are normally a time of rapid bone loss. Strength training and weight-bearing exercise can help you keep the bone you have, while sedentary women are losing bone mass. Regular cardiovascular exercise has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and type II diabetes, lower blood pressure, improve lipid profiles, increase insulin sensitivity and prevent weight gain. There are a lot of reasons to keep moving.

Women may experience more urinary stress incontinence (poor bladder control) after menopause. This is because the pelvic floor muscles atrophy when estrogen levels drop. Pelvic floor muscles control urination, defecation and support the sexual organs. Many women benefit from the regular performance of pelvic floor or "Kegel" exercises. Check with your doctor if incontinence has become a problem for you to make sure you are performing these exercises properly and that you receive other medical treatment if necessary. Your doctor can refer you to a physical therapist who is trained in this area and uses specialized techniques to help you learn how to strengthen these important muscles.

Are there certain types of exercise which are particularly important during menopause?

A generally active lifestyle is the key. However, a woman's aging body will benefit from three major types of activity:

- aerobic conditioning for heart health and calorie-burning (walking, cycling, swimming, aerobics etc).
- strength training for muscles, bones and metabolism (dumbbells, weight machines, exercise bands).
- stretching for flexible muscles and fluid movement (stretching, yoga, pilates etc).

Recreational activities such as tennis, dance, martial arts, etc, can provide additional muscle and bone building benefits and increase your fun factor! And don't forget those pelvic floor exercises.

Older bodies require more diligence about warm-up. Allow 10 minutes of gradual warm-up at the beginning of your exercise sessions. This should include low-level cardiovascular exercise (walking, cycling) and range of motion exercises (gentle movement). Many experts feel that programs to preserve or recapture strength and flexibility are the key to injury prevention and improved performance.

Exercise should add enjoyment and energy to your life, so find ways of moving that give you pleasure along with better health. Many women enjoy activities such as hiking, golf, skiing, gardening, dancing (ballroom, folk, modern, jazz) or yoga. Find your own activity niche and invite your friends, neighbors or family members to join you. Exercise can be a great way to stay connected with those we love or build new relationships. Menopause can be accompanied by a number of physical changes or symptoms including hot flashes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, sleep

How does exercise compare with hormone replacement therapy in protecting body's health through menopause?

The decision to take hormone replacement therapy is a personal one that is best made with the guidance of your family doctor or gynecologist, who understands your individual health status and risks. Exercise and hormone replacement therapy can work in partnership to protect your bones and improve pelvic floor muscle tone. There are certain risks to HRT that make it an unwise choice for many women. However, every woman can benefit from regular exercise in a variety of ways. Plus, it's a lot cheaper, and there are no unwanted side effects except for occasional muscle soreness and a healthy glow to your cheeks.



Exercise and Menopause

There was a time when the word was never spoken, even between a mother and daughter. Menopause, still referred to as "the change" in some circles, has now come out in to the open. It's about time. After all, a woman can expect to live one-third to one-half of her life past menopause, and these can be among the most satisfying years of her life. Exercise plays a key role in making the transition through menopause easier and in enhancing health, happiness and productivity during the second half of life.

How Does Exercise Help?

The good news is that a regular program of physical activity can help manage many of the uncomfortable symptoms of menopause as well as the related health concerns, such as heart disease and osteoporosis.

Menopause and Beyond: Exercise Helps-

Reduce and prevent symptoms :

- Hot flashes
- Vaginal and bladder atrophy
- Joint pain

- Anxiety, irritability, depression
- Sleep disturbances, insomnia

Reduce risk of :

- Heart disease
- Osteoporosis
- Weight gain

Improve and increase :

- Strength, stamina, flexibility, energy
- Function of vital organs
- Condition of heart, lungs and muscles

The mood-elevating, tension-relieving effects of aerobic exercise help reduce the depression and anxiety that often accompanies menopause. Aerobic exercise also promotes the loss of abdominal fat- the place most women more readily gain weight during menopause. In addition, some research studies have shown that the increased estrogen levels that follow a women's exercise session coincide with an overall decrease in the severity of hot flashes. Strength training also helps. It stimulates bones to retain the minerals that keep them dense and strong, thus preventing the onset and progression of osteoporosis. These effects of exercise, along with improved cholesterol levels and physical fitness, work together to help prevent heart disease. Keep in mind, though, that good nutrition works better with a physically active lifestyle. A low-fat, high-fiber diet and adequate calcium intake are vital to realize the full benefits of exercise.

The Good News

If you have been a consistent exerciser during the years leading to menopause, you already have an advantage. Aerobic activity during childbearing years reduces the risk of breast cancer, a disease that becomes more prevalent after menopause. You also will have a jump on your bone health since your strength-training exercises may have increased the density and strength of your bones.

To reap the benefits of exercise, a balanced program of weight-bearing aerobic activity (walking is great), strength training (with weights, resistance bands, yoga or even gardening) and flexibility is essential. Consistency is key so strive for some moderate activity daily or at least most days of the week, every week.

References:

<http://www.osteopathic.org/osteopathic-health/about-your-health/health-conditions-library/womens-health/Pages/postmenopausal-exercise.aspx>
http://www.acefitness.org/fitfacts/pdfs/fitfacts/itemid_91.pdf

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Calcium Supplements Linked to Longer Lifespan in Women

Calcium for **women** is essential through every phase of life. It is needed to help build strong bones and teeth and it also helps to regulate heart beat, clot blood and conduct nerve impulses. As one ages, calcium plays an important role in fighting osteoporosis (a disease that can cause bone density to decrease).

How Much Calcium does a Woman Need?

The amount of calcium that women need depends on their age. A 1,000 mg of calcium per day may be sufficient before middle age and before menopause. As a woman becomes older and once menopause occurs, she should increase this amount to 1,500 mg per day.

The Best Sources of Calcium

The best food source of calcium is raw milk and other raw dairy products. One of the worst side effects of pasteurization is that it makes much of the calcium contained in raw milk insoluble, so it is best to drink milk raw to absorb its calcium.

Dark green, leafy vegetables, including spinach, turnip greens and mustard greens are another great source of calcium, as are sesame seeds.



Calcium from dietary sources is usually more completely absorbed than calcium from supplements, so eating more of these foods is a simple way to boost calcium levels.

Vitamin D is also important for calcium absorption, so make sure that your vitamin D levels are optimized as well.

Can Supplements Supply Calcium Requirements?

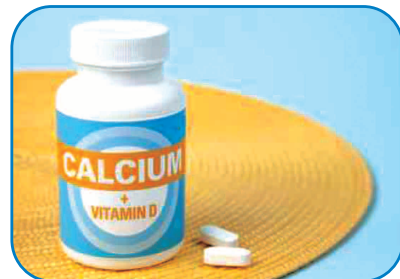
Calcium supplements are a great way to assure that a woman gets the adequate amount of daily calcium. When choosing a

supplement, one should consider such things as name brands, the total calcium amount in each supplement and whether the supplement could cause stomach distress.

Some women will choose calcium supplements that also contain Vitamin D. Vitamin D is known to help protect bones. This vitamin is found naturally in all dairy products.

Calcium Needs for Lactating Women

It is essential that lactating women make sure that they are getting an adequate amount of daily calcium. Most health care professionals will tell this amount is 1,000 mg to 1,300 mg a day. This calcium can come from the foods that a breastfeeding mother eats, a calcium supplement or a combination of the two.



It is essential that a woman makes sure that she gets an adequate supply of calcium while lactating since breastfeeding causes a temporary loss of calcium to her bones. Once the baby has been weaning, her calcium level will return to normal.

Important Facts about Calcium

Some extra facts have to consider when taking calcium for health benefits are:

- It is best to take calcium throughout the day. If you are taking calcium mainly in supplement form, consider splitting your dosage up into a morning serving and a nightly serving. The nightly dose is the most important serving. Bone loss is known to occur at a higher rate at night.
- Your bones don't care what form of calcium you take. The supplement form works, as well as ingesting the calcium in the way of foods and drinks.
- If you are taking such medicines as Alendronate Sodium or Risedronate Sodium, you should not take calcium that morning. The calcium will interfere with its absorption.
- Calcium rarely causes constipation and bloating. If you become constipated, try increasing your liquid consumption (water and juices). If you become bloated, consider switching your calcium brand or trying a lower dosage.

Calcium is an extremely important nutrient, so cater to your bones and enjoy a daily dosage of dairy.

Getting more calcium in the diet could help to extend lifespan, new research suggests.

Researchers found that women who consumed the most calcium in food were 25 percent less likely to die over the next decade.



Calcium is well known as the mineral for building strong bones and although the vast majority of calcium is stored in the bones and teeth, it's important for other bodily processes as well.

For instance, calcium plays a role in muscle contraction, blood clotting and cell membrane function. It also helps regulate the activity of enzymes and if the body does not have enough available calcium, it can lead to weakened bones, increase the risk of blood pressure, certain cancers and even shorten lifespan.

Study Details

In this study, researchers looked at more than 23,000 women who were 45 to 79 years old at the study's outset and were followed for

10 years. All had reported on their diet at the beginning of the study. During follow-up, about 2,358 died.

The top calcium consumers had a 25 percent lower risk of dying from any cause and a 23 percent lower risk of dying from heart disease during follow-up relative to women that had the least amount of calcium in their diet.

"Intake of calcium above that recommended daily may reduce all-cause mortality," the researchers concluded.

The findings are in line with previous research linking higher calcium intake with lower mortality in both men and women.

Calcium's benefit likely came from several areas, including reducing blood pressure, cholesterol or blood sugar levels, according to researchers.

Calcium is vitally important to the body's ability to function, and if there is not enough of it in the blood from dietary sources, the body will begin to use stores of the mineral from the bones. This is why it's so important to include calcium-rich foods in the diet.

The Best Sources of Calcium

To protect bone health and prevent diseases, however, calcium should not be taken on its own, but as part of a healthy diet. Bone is composed of at least a dozen minerals, which are all required along with calcium to keep the skeletal system strong, healthy and disease-free. A good way to ensure a plentiful supply of these trace minerals is through unprocessed salts, such as Himalayan salt, which is one of the best sources of these ionic trace minerals, responsible for catalyzing many important functions in the body and helping in the absorption of nutrients.

Reference:

<http://www.nursingtimes.net/nursing-practice/clinical-zones/nutrition/calcium-increases-womens-life-expectancy-study-shows/5059017.article>



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Calcium increases women's life expectancy, study shows

Taking a moderate dose of calcium supplement every day can help women live longer, a study has found.

Up to 1,000 mg of calcium consumed daily in supplement form is associated with a longer lifespan in women, according to the findings of research among more than 9,000 people in Canada between 1995 and 2007.

Although the data showed women who took calcium supplements had a lower mortality risk, there was no statistical benefit for men, according to the research.

Higher amounts of calcium were potentially linked to longer lifespan in women, regardless of the source - dairy foods, non-dairy foods or supplements - the study, accepted for publication in The Endocrine Society's Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism, found.

The findings come after past studies have linked calcium supplements, taken by millions of elderly people and post-menopausal women to prevent bone thinning, to heart disease risk.

Study lead author Dr David Goltzman, of McGill University in Montreal, said: "Our study found daily use of calcium supplements was associated with a lower risk of death among women."

"The benefit was seen for women who took doses of up to 1,000 mg per day, regardless of whether the supplement contained vitamin D."

He added: "Higher amounts of calcium were potentially linked to longer lifespans in women, regardless of the source of the calcium."

"That is, the same benefits were seen when the calcium came from dairy foods, non-dairy foods or supplements."

The study said: "Our analysis showed that total calcium intake among women was more likely to be beneficial than harmful, and that the same was true of calcium intake from dairy sources, non-dairy sources, and supplements."

"In fact, we observed that supplemental calcium intake up to 1,000 mg a day among women was associated with statistically significant decreased mortality, although the results were inconclusive for supplement intake exceeding 1,000 mg a day."

Ref : <http://www.nursingtimes.net/nursing-practice/clinical-zones/nutrition/calcium-increases-womens-life-expectancy>

Congratulations !

The Winners of **WOMEN'S  HEALTH** *Quiz Competition*

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