

# Health care tips

## Keeping your bones strong and healthy

### What is osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is when your bones begin to lose their mass and shape. Bones also become weak and break more easily. Many people do not know they have osteoporosis until they break a bone. That's why you need to know what you and your doctor can do to keep your bones strong and healthy.

### Is there medication I can take for osteoporosis?

Yes, ask your doctor if you should take a medication to keep your bones strong and healthy. Taking medication can lower your chances of breaking a bone. There are several types of medication you can take for osteoporosis. One type is called bisphosphonates. Alendronate is a bisphosphonate drug. It's low-cost and generic. Talk to your doctor to see which medication is right for you.

### What are the next steps?

Talk to your doctor about ways to keep your bones strong and healthy. A first step is to discuss getting a bone mineral density test.

### Here are some questions to ask your doctor:

- How can I get a bone mineral density test to see how healthy my bones are?
- Do I need to take a medication to keep my bones strong and healthy?
- What medication is best for me?

### What can I do to keep my bones healthy?<sup>1,2</sup>



Eat / take calcium- and vitamin D-rich food and supplements



Do more weight bearing exercises



Avoid or limit caffeine, alcohol and smoking

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**National Osteoporosis Foundation** | 1-800-231-4222 | [NOF.org](https://www.nof.org)

**National Institutes of Health Osteoporosis and  
Related Bone Diseases National Resource Center** | 1-800-624-2663 | [bones.nih.gov](https://www.bones.nih.gov)

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[optumrx.com](https://www.optumrx.com)

<sup>1</sup> The North American Menopause Society. Management of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women: 2010 position statement of The North American Menopause Society. *Menopause*. 2010; 17(1): 25–54.

<sup>2</sup> National Osteoporosis Foundation. Clinician's Guide to Prevention and Treatment of Osteoporosis. Washington, DC: National Osteoporosis Foundation; 2014. Available at: [nof.org/hcp/clinicians-guide](https://www.nof.org/hcp/clinicians-guide) Accessed April 14, 2017.

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