



Care Partner Information

Tips for Providing Older Adult Care

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a condition that causes bones to become weak and brittle. About half of adults age 65 and older have this condition. This can make them more likely to break a bone if they fall.

The risk of osteoporosis is higher in women, especially those who are small and thin. Other risk factors include older age, family history, low hormone levels, smoking, drinking, and not getting enough exercise. Exercises that can help include walking, running and lifting weights. Vitamin D and calcium also can help make bones stronger.

Older adults should ask their healthcare providers about getting checked for osteoporosis. This is done using a “DEXA scan,” which is a bone x-ray. If bones are weak, there is medication that can help.

Getting Checked for Osteoporosis	
Who	All adults over age 65.
What	A bone x-ray, using a DEXA scan.
When	The earlier the better to help reduce the risk of breaking a bone.
Why	Medications can help reduce the risk of breaking a bone.
How	Talk to a healthcare provider about having a bone x-ray to check for osteoporosis.

This Care Partner Information page is part of a series on older adult caregiving tips. They are written to help family and community caregivers, direct care workers and community health representatives care for older adults. Available in English and Spanish at www.aging.arizona.edu

Vitamin D

Vitamin D can help to improve muscle and bone strength, which reduces the chances of a fall. It also helps the body to absorb calcium. Other things, such as cod liver oil, can help the body take in Vitamin D. Older adults should talk to their healthcare provider about adding Vitamin D to their diet and before taking it as a pill.

Vitamin D		
Who	How Much	Foods Rich with Vitamin D
Adults aged 51 to 70	600 international units (IU) daily	Eggs Milk Portabella mushrooms
Adults older than 70 years	800 international units (IU) daily	Salmon Tofu Tuna

Calcium can help bones and teeth stay strong and healthy. Not having enough calcium in your diet can lead to osteoporosis. Older adults need more calcium than younger adults. Calcium is mostly found in dairy products. Older adults should talk to their healthcare provider about

Calcium		
Who	How Much	Foods Rich with Calcium
Men aged 51 to 70	1000 milligrams (mg) daily	Dairy (milk, cheese, yogurt) Leafy greens (spinach, kale, collards) Oatmeal
Women older than 50, and males older than 70 years	1,200 milligrams (mg) daily	Salmon Tofu White beans

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