



Natural Solutions for Healthy Living

Windy Skeete PO Box 323 Ladysmith, WI 54848 Phone: 715-403-0275 E-mail: windy@herbtimeplus.com

Remedying Disease

Osteoporosis

Facts - Myths - Natural Approach - Part 2



In the September/October issue of Herb Time we learned that Osteoporosis affects more than 20 million people in the United States including one out of four postmenopausal women.

We also discovered that Osteoporosis is a disease of excessive bone loss and decreased bone density.

Those who are more prone to Osteoporosis are those who smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, are under exercised, deficient in vitamin D, calcium, or magnesium, and in those whose diet is meat-based rather than vegetable and whole grain based.

When comparing the medical texts we discovered that there are typically three myths about Osteoporosis:

- #1 - Osteoporosis is a calcium deficiency disease.*
- #2 - Osteoporosis is an estrogen deficiency disease.*
- #3 - Osteoporosis is a disease of menopause.*

In this issue we would like to cover:

- Osteoporosis and Progesterone, and evaluate the role progesterone plays in bone mass.
- How Bones Are Depleted - lifestyle factors, dietary habits, and medications that deplete bones.
- Nutritional Factors - the role nutrition plays in aiding bone mass.

Osteoporosis and Progesterone

It is commonly believed, especially by estrogen supplementation manufacturers, that estrogen loss is the major factor in osteoporosis. However, we discovered this couldn't be correct, as bone loss occurs 10 to 15 years prior to menopause, when estrogen levels are still normal.

Dr. John Lee states, "the more important factor in Osteoporosis is the lack of progesterone, which causes a decrease in new bone formation. Adding progesterone will actively increase bone mass and density and can reverse Osteoporosis."

Please understand that progesterone (cream) is not a magic bullet for curing Osteoporosis, there are other factors that are involved, such as proper diet, weight-bearing exercises and some vitamin and mineral supplements, all of which we will attempt to cover in this newsletter.

How Bones Are Depleted

Bones are depleted through improper lifestyle factors, dietary habits which are unhealthy, over-abundance of that which we might consider healthful, and the consumption of most medications.

One of the greatest nutritional myth that creates enormous harm to the body is that of a high protein diet. It has generally been taught that high levels of protein is essential to health. However the opposite has been proven true, and is now being given proper recognition, although most of the damage has already been done to those over 40 years of age.



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Protein is essential for physical development, but it has been found that only 40 to 60 grams (or 1.5 to 2 ounces) per day are necessary.

Consider this, if you are a meat eater...one six ounce, low-fat hamburger provides 1.5 ounces of protein, meeting your recommended daily allowance. Anything more than this results in calcium loss from bones and an increased risk of Osteoporosis.

If more protein is eaten than required for nutritional purposes, **it is not stored by the body** (as fat is, for example) **but must be excreted**. Excess protein waste products are excreted in the urine. The excretion of protein waste products through the kidneys increases the urinary excretion of calcium. The ratio between calcium ingested and calcium lost in urine is called the *calcium balance*. A high intake of protein creates a negative calcium balance (more is lost than was ingested). A negative calcium balance will cause it to be pulled from the bones, thus causing bones to be depleted.

Medications such as diuretics cause bone depletion, as many diuretics increase urinary excretion of minerals. Furosemide (Lasix) is one that promotes the greatest loss of calcium, thus a potential cause of Osteoporosis.

A better approach to water retention is through dietary changes such as avoiding foods high in salt and sodium bicarbonate.

Nutritional Factors - Natural Approach

There are several nutritional factors which help to aid bone mass. For example, green leafy vegetables such as: collard greens, kale, parsley, lettuce, and other green leafy foods help to protect against Osteoporosis. These foods contain a broad range of minerals and vitamins, including calcium, Vitamin K1 and boron, which are essential to maintaining healthy bones.

According to Dr. Murray, "A function of Vitamin K1 that is often overlooked is its role in converting inactive osteocalcin to its active form. Osteocalcin is the major noncollagen protein in bone. Osteocalcin's role is to anchor calcium molecules and hold them in place within the bone. A deficiency of Vitamin K leads

to impaired mineralization of bone due to inadequate osteocalcin levels."

The richest sources of Vitamin K1 are dark green leafy vegetables, broccoli, lettuce, cabbage and spinach. Other good sources are asparagus, oats, whole wheat, and fresh green peas.

Boron is a trace mineral that has been found to reduce urinary calcium excretion by 44%. It has also been found to activate certain hormones, including estrogen and vitamin D. Fruits and vegetables are the main dietary sources of boron. Diets low in these foods may be deficient in boron.

Calcium supplementation is necessary and effective in reducing bone loss in postmenopausal women, however the type of calcium is just as essential.

Calcium carbonate (from oyster shells), dolomite and bone meal have been found to contain high levels of lead.

However, calcium citrate has been found to be the most effective and best absorbed, especially by women with low gastric acid output, according to Dr. Murray's research.

How much calcium should you take per day? 600-800 milligrams per day for a vegetarian. For a non-vegetarian 1200-1500 milligrams per day.

The best source of calcium I can recommend to you is green leafy vegetables. Preferably run through a juicer with carrots. Also liquid chlorophyll taken 2-3 times per day. Calcium taken in its natural form will give assurance of proper absorption, and freedom from lead. If time is a factor, supplementation should not be neglected.

Building bones should be a life-long goal beginning at childhood through proper lifestyle and dietary habits.

