

Building Strong Bones

Osteoporosis, a bone-thinning disease, has been called “a pediatric disease with a geriatric outcome,” because bone mass gained or lost during childhood and adolescence greatly determines lifelong bone health. Youth is the best time to invest in your child’s bones through nutrition and physical activity.

Nutrition for healthy bones means eating foods rich in calcium and vitamin D. If your kids are lactose intolerant or just don’t like drinking milk, don’t despair. They can receive calcium from foods such as kale, bok choy, broccoli and almonds, or from calcium-fortified orange juice, cereals, or breads.

Our bones get stronger when we use them. Weight-bearing activities such as walking, running, dancing, tennis, basketball, gymnastics, or soccer are needed to build strong bones. Have your kids play outside—the sunshine will provide most children with all the vitamin D they need.

And moms, it’s never too late to build healthier, stronger bones. Make exercise a priority and stick to a healthy, calcium-rich diet, your positive lifestyle will benefit both you and your children for years to come.