

Module 8, Lesson 5 Tool: **Benefiting Bone Health**

While bone density peaks for most adults between the ages of 25 to 35, bone is being resorbed and reconstructed all the time. You *can* make new bone after that magic peak point, but hormone shifts make it harder. Bones are mostly a storage facility for calcium, which we need for nerve functioning, for our hearts to beat and for muscle and cell functioning.

The recommendation for calcium is 1200 mg per day. Calcium rich foods include:

- Dairy (milk, yogurt, cheese)
- Some dairy alternatives (check labels)
- Dark green leafy vegetables (bok choy, kale, broccoli)
- Sardines
- Salmon
- Almonds
- Beans (white beans, pinto beans, red beans)
- Chia seeds
- Figs
- Oranges
- Sesame seeds
- Tofu

Bones also require vitamin D to remain strong. The recommendation for vitamin D is 800-1000 IU daily. Sources include:

- The sun (causes our bodies to produce our own vitamin D)
- Fatty fish
- Fortified calcium rich foods like milk and orange juice
- Egg yolks
- Cheese made from fortified milk

Magnesium is also important for bones. The recommendation is 400 mg per day. Sources include:

- Dark green leafy vegetables (spinach, chard)
- Pumpkin seeds
- Nuts (Brazil nuts, cashews, almonds, hazelnuts)

- Legumes and beans (lima beans, chickpeas)
- Whole grains
- Avocados

Other recommendations for strong bones:

- Exercise, including weight training
- Don't smoke
- If you drink alcohol, keep it at 1 drink per day, which is the general recommendation for women
- Maintain a healthy weight