

MAKING EXERCISE FOR OSTEOPOROSIS SAFE

Many people worry about the safety of exercise later in life. You may be concerned if you already have osteoporosis or osteopenia. Perhaps you have never been very physically active. Whatever your concern, you can choose from a range of safe exercise options.

To Ensure Your Safety During Exercise For Osteoporosis, Keep These Guidelines In Mind:

- **Talk to your doctor before beginning any exercise program. This is especially important if you know you have bone loss or osteoporosis.**

- **Weight-bearing exercise does not have to be high impact. Running, jogging and jumping may put stress on your spine. These high-impact activities may lead to fractures in weakened bones. If you already have bone loss, choose gentler weight-bearing exercise like walking, dancing, low-impact aerobics, and gardening.**

- **If you already have osteoporosis, be careful of exercises that involve bending and twisting at the waist. This motion can put you at risk of fracture. Exercises that involve waist twisting include sit-ups, toe touches, and rowing machines. Golf, tennis, bowling, and some yoga poses also include some twisting at the waist. Talk to your doctor before choosing any of these activities.**

Is Aerobic Exercise Safe For Seniors?

If you're Over 50, Get The Go-Ahead From A Doctor Before Starting Any Vigorous Exercise Program. But Even If You Only Plan To Start Walking Around The Neighborhood, You Should Check With A Doctor If You Have Any Of The Following Conditions:

- **High Blood Pressure**
- **Diabetes**
- **Fast, Irregular, Or Extremely Slow Heartbeat During Rest**
- **Heart Disease**
- **Past Heart Attack, Especially If It Occurred In The Last Year**
- **Recent Chest Pains, Especially If They Haven't Been Explained By A Doctor**
- **Shortness Of Breath Or Chest Pain After Extremely Mild Exertion**
- **Recent Unexplained Weight Loss Of 10 Pounds Or More**
- **Pain In Buttocks Or Back Of Legs During Walking**

What Precautions Should I Take?

Once you get the green light, exercise with common sense. Drink lots of water, including a glass before and after exercising. Avoid vigorous workouts in hot, humid weather, check air quality warnings, and see a doctor promptly if you feel dizzy, nauseated, or disoriented or if you're unable to talk. Other warning signs of overexertion include pains in your chest, upper back, left shoulder, or arm. To prevent strain on your heart and injuries to your muscles, try at least five minutes of low-intensity warm-up exercises followed by five to 10 minutes of slow stretching before every workout. After exercising, cool down with a few minutes of stretching and slow walking. And don't forget to congratulate yourself now and then: you've found the next best thing to the fountain of youth!