

Physical Activity and Bone Health

A person's bones are an essential part of lifelong health. Building healthy bones by adopting healthy habits early on can help children avoid injuries as they grow older.

Bones develop rapidly and reach peak potential by the time most people are in their 20s. Childhood and adolescence, when bones are developing, is the best time to invest in one's bones. The health habits young children form now can literally make or break their bones later in life.

Encouraging plenty of physical activity early in life is key. Bones are similar to muscles: The more work they do, the stronger they become. To build strong bones, weight-bearing exercises (activities that use one's own body weight for resistance) are best.

*Help build up your child's
"bone bank" to save for the future!*

Bone-Building Activities

- Basketball
- Dancing
- Gymnastics
- Hiking
- Hopscotch
- Jump rope
- Lifting weights
- Running
- Skipping
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Walking

(As appropriate for age)



Physical Activity and Bone Health (continued)

Get moving!

The most important thing to remember about bone health: Spend less time sitting down and more time up and moving.

It's important to note, though, that excessive exercise and overtraining can be detrimental to bones, especially when paired with restrictive eating. Just like muscles, bones need proper rest and recovery to remain strong.

Help your kids find a variety of physical activities or sports in which they enjoy participating. Also, establish firm limits on sedentary time in front of screens or on the couch. One of the best ways to reinforce the importance of regular physical activity is to be a strong role model. Research shows that active children have active parents. Making physical activity a priority in your life will have a positive impact on your children.

Children who learn good nutrition and exercise habits by their preteen years are more likely to carry these habits with them for the rest of their lives.

Be sure to speak with your child's doctor about bone health. If your child has a special medical condition that may interfere with bone mass development and growth, ask about alternatives or individualized activity programs.

One of the best gifts to give kids is a lifelong love of physical activity.



The Children's Hospital Los Angeles Sports Medicine Program offers a multidisciplinary approach to caring for your child to ensure strong bones and a strong body.

To schedule an appointment, call 323-361-2142.

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