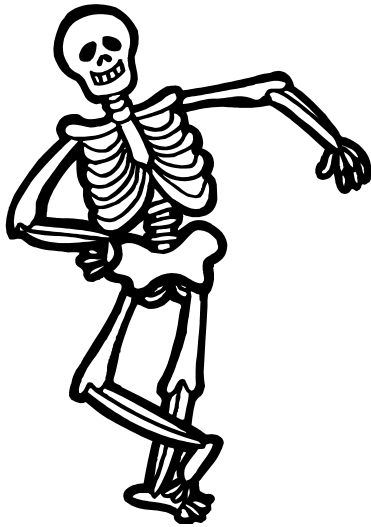


Protect Your Skeleton

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Everyone knows having an adequate intake of calcium can help protect and build strong bones... But did you know there are other factors that can impact the health of your skeleton?

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is needed to help pull calcium into bones from the blood and is a big factor in whether or not calcium is absorbed into your bones. Unfortunately, there are very few food sources that offer high amounts of vitamin D. Some of them include: fatty fish (mackerel, salmon, tuna), egg yolks, and fortified orange juice, cereal, and dairy. Since it would take upwards of 10 glasses of milk a day to get the recommended amount, it might be a good idea to look for a multivitamin that contains vitamin D.

Vitamin K

Just like vitamin D, vitamin K is also needed to help your body move calcium into your bones. Without it, properly absorbing calcium to build strong bones can be difficult. Originally, it was believed that bacteria in your intestines produce enough vitamin K to supply your body. However, recent research has shown that the vitamin K produced by our intestinal bacteria is not enough. Vitamin K is not commonly found in supplement form. In fact, most multivitamins do not contain Vitamin K at all. This means we should try to increase the vitamin K intake from our food! Great sources of Vitamin K include: kale, spinach, broccoli, asparagus and other green veggies.

Weight Bearing Physical Activity

Among other health benefits, regular physical activity can help build strong bones. Examples of bone-healthy weight bearing activities include walking, jogging, and weight training. Try taking the stairs and parking your car further away from work to add more activity in your day. Strive for 30 minutes of physical activity every day!



Check out these skeleton friendly Halloween recipes that are packed with vitamin K, calcium, and vitamin D!

Witches Brew Creamy Spinach Soup

1 ½ cups water
3 cubes low sodium chicken bouillon
10 oz package of frozen spinach
2 T. butter
½ cup flour
3 cups of skim milk
3 T. dried minced onion

In a saucepan, combine chicken bouillon, spinach, minced onion, and water. Bring to a boil and cook for 5 minutes. Melt butter in a large saucepan on low heat. Wisk in flour and milk. Once flour mixture has thickened, stir in the spinach mixture.



Green Slime Smoothie

1 banana
2 cups chopped kale
¾ cup skim milk
*Optional: ice cubes

In a blender, combine banana, kale, and milk. Blend until smooth. *Optional: Add ice cubes for a frozen green slime smoothie!

Incorporating these nutrients into your daily meal plan will help to protect your skeleton this October and every month! To learn more, contact a registered dietitian in your area and/or check out www.eatright.org.



Lauren is a public health nutritionist and working towards becoming a Registered Dietitian. She is a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and is committed to improving the health of her community. To find a registered dietitian in your area, visit www.eatright.org and click on "Find a Registered Dietitian."