

[IMAGE]

## Why Your Bones Need Vitamin D

By Editorial Staff

Especially when you're older. Why? Because with age, two things happen: First, we naturally lose bone density as we get older, which makes bones more subject to a break. Second, age also can rob us of muscle mass, balance and normal gait (walking) abilities, which increases our risk of falling. Now put the two together: increased risk of falling and weaker bones; it's a recipe for a bone break / fracture waiting to happen.

That's why our bones need vitamin D, which helps keep them strong and thus reduces fracture risk. The latest study to support this association has found that older women (who are particularly at risk for bone issues after menopause) with poor vitamin D status were more likely to suffer a hip fracture and require any fracture-related hospitalization than women with higher D status. As you might expect, bone density at several anatomical sites was also lower in these women compared to women with higher vitamin D levels. Study findings appeared in the *Journal of Bone and Mineral Research*.

So, let's recap: Bones get weaker as we get older. We tend to get weaker as we get older, too, which means we're more likely to fall (on our bones). Bone fractures are a BIG deal when we're older; in fact, a high percentage of seniors who suffer a hip fracture may not come back from it. But getting enough vitamin D (from food sources and/or a supplement) can help keep bones strong and reduce fracture risk. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

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