



Center for Integrative Oncology and Survivorship

Bone Health for Cancer Survivors

General Recommendations

- Do not smoke
- Limit how much alcohol you drink
- Exercise: Include 150 minutes each week of aerobic activity and strengthening/weight-bearing exercises 2-3 times weekly.

Specific Recommendations

Calcium Citrate

Strive for 1,200 milligrams a day. Foods rich in calcium are better than calcium supplements. Let your kitchen be your “medicine cabinet” and fill it with calcium-rich items.

Bone Densitometry (DEXA) Test

Get tested every two years starting at age 65. If you have risk factors for osteoporosis before that age, you may need to get tested sooner. Women who take aromatase inhibitors or have premature or early menopause and men on androgen deprivation therapy also may need a bone density test before age 65.

Vitamin D3

The recommended dose of vitamin D is 1,000-2,000 IU (international units) a day.

Vitamin D is needed by the body to absorb calcium, develop bones, control cell growth, reduce swelling, help neuromuscular function and boost the immune system. Low levels of vitamin D can lead to poor hair growth, a weak immune system, increased cancer risk and osteomalacia (weak muscles and bones).

Known as the “sunshine vitamin,” vitamin D is naturally made by your body when you expose your skin to the sun. It often is added to foods such as milk and orange juice. Vitamin D supplements are available as well.

NOTE: The more, the better is not true for vitamin D. Too much can be deadly, so stay below taking 10,000 IU a day.

If you have questions about anything on this page, please call the Center for Integrative Oncology and Survivorship at **(864) 455-1346**.