

Hop for Bone Health

Did you play hop scotch or jump rope when you were a child? It turns out these might be even better for your health, as an adult, than they were when you were young.

Bone is living tissue, just like muscle, and key bone-building years for your body are those when your skeleton is growing — typically through your mid-20s. This is a critical period for bone health because what is built during these years will need to last a lifetime. After age 35, you gradually lose bone as a part of the natural aging process.

Regular physical activity will help keep bones strong and slow the rate of bone loss, even if you have fragile bones or osteoporosis. By leading an active lifestyle, you can significantly decrease your risk of falling and breaking a bone.

What type of exercise is good for your bones? The weight-bearing kind, which is anything that forces you to work against gravity. This type of exercise is effective because as you put more tension on your muscles it also puts more pressure or “stress” on your bones. Your body responds by creating fresh, new bone and greater bone strength.

Weight-bearing exercise is basically anything that involves impacts with the earth and requires your feet and legs to support you, so any activity you do while standing. Some examples include brisk walking, hiking, jogging, climbing stairs, weight training, dancing, yoga, and tennis. Gardening can be weight bearing if you carry a water can, walk in your yard, etc.

There is another type of weight-bearing activity that could be better for your bones than the exercises mentioned above — jumping and hopping. A recent study, reported in the American Journal of Health Promotion, reveals that jumping 10 times/twice a day provides greater bone-building benefits than running or jogging. This is not recommended for anyone who has osteoporosis, but for those who want to be proactive with exercise, this is great news!

Even if you walk briskly or jog most days of the week, you will get greater bone-health benefit if you also hop or leap like

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fleas every day to jar your bones a little and send a message that they need to get stronger. If hopping is too difficult, start with marching or doing heel drops. Remember that your goal is to create impact with the ground or floor to jar your bones just a bit.

First, warm up your muscles by walking for a minute or marching in place.

Marching with impact: This movement is basic marching in place where you push, or stomp, your feet on the ground for impact.

Heel Drop: Hold onto something, at the proper height, for stability (back of a chair or countertop, for example). Rise up on your toes, then drop your heels down abruptly.

Power Hop: You can hop on both legs, or for maximum benefit hop on one leg. If necessary, hold onto something for stability. Bend your knees for cushion when you land. Never land on straight knees. You can do the hops quickly or rest for up to a half-minute between hops.

This is beneficial for people of all ages and the earlier in life you start stressing your bones, the more benefits you will likely see.

A [demonstration of hopping to strengthen bones](#).

Don't Text and Walk!

Physical injuries from texting and walking occur more frequently than from texting while driving, although the latter often results in injuries that are far more severe. With the rise of social media, texting isn't the only concern. Think about how often you see someone walking, head down, cell phone in hand, and completely unaware of what is going on around them.

A study conducted at Ohio State University focused on pedestrian injuries between 2004 and 2010. They discovered that while the total number of pedestrian injuries decreased, emergency room visits for injuries related to cell phones tripled during that time.

There are very few laws in place that restrict texting while walking, and common sense should tell you it is not a very good idea. Using voice commands on your phone can help, but the best advice is to wait until you get to where you are going before you pull out your cell phone.

Other tips that can help keep pedestrians safe is to cross the street at designated crosswalks and intersections, and avoid jaywalking. If you are walking at night, carry a flashlight and wear something light colored that will reflect light. Wear a wristband with flashing lights or that reflects light.

Walk on sidewalks whenever possible. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic. Always carry your driver's license or ID, and your cell phone so you can contact someone in case of an emergency.

When crossing a street, don't assume vehicles will stop. Make eye contact with driver to make sure he/she is paying attention and can see you. Don't rely completely on pedestrian signals and look before you cross the street.

A key take-away is to always assume that road-users are not aware that pedestrians have the right-of-way, because many drivers don't realize this. And don't get distracted by your cell phone!

You Rock – Mini Challenge

As Walk Kansas comes to a close for 2017, we will end the mini-challenge series with a fun one! This week, give at least six sincere compliments to different people — preferably others you know that are participating in Walk Kansas. When you give a compliment, you make the world a better place — better for the other person and better for you! Positive feedback motivates people to change far more than negative feedback does. The goal of this mini-challenge is to get you into the habit of thinking positively about others and giving compliments. Enjoy the “You Rock” challenge this week!

Health Quest Credit for Walk Kansas

If you have the state employee health plan (SEHP) benefits, you are eligible to receive Health Quest rewards for participating in Walk Kansas. This program is considered a “Wellness Challenge” and worth four Health Quest credits.

In order to receive these credits you will need to provide information (first/last name and Employee ID #) [through this survey](#).

The survey will remain open through May 17, and you can also submit information for a spouse that is participating. You must also log minutes of activity and fruit/veg consumption online to show participation before credits will be awarded.

If you are not able to submit information through the survey link or if you have questions, please contact Sharolyn Jackson at 785-532-2273, sharolyn@ksu.edu.



Going Spiral

This is one more way to get your veggies! You can create ribbons or strands of nutrient-packed veggies with a spiralizer or vegetable peeler.

Veggie noodles are gaining in popularity for a number of reasons. They are a gluten-free option for cutting down on carbs found in pasta and they offer a host of nutrients. While there is nothing wrong with pasta, it is easy to overdo it a bit on portion size. A good strategy is to mix pasta with veggie noodles or spaghetti squash so you get more veggies while keeping pasta portions in check.

You can transform many different vegetables into noodles, but the best ones are those that are firm and long, or that can be cut long in spirals, such as zucchini, carrots, sweet potatoes, squash, broccoli stems, parsnips and turnips.

Spiraled veggies are quick and easy to cook, and cooking times will vary depending on the type. Zucchini cooks quickly, in 1 to 2 minutes if boiled, and sweet potatoes usually take 4 to 5 minutes. You can also incorporate spiraled veggies in casseroles, kebabs, salads, and many different recipes. Raw spiraled veggies have an interesting texture and kids enjoy eating them.

Eating more vegetables is just a twirl away!



French Onion Zoodle Bake

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups zucchini noodles (approximately 2 medium zucchini)
- 1 yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme, chopped
- 1½ tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¼ cup low sodium beef broth
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- ½ cup Provolone or Fontina cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Melt butter in a skillet, over medium heat. Add onion and cook for several minutes. Add sugar, Worcestershire sauce, and thyme. Stir and cook for another couple of minutes.
3. Add beef broth and cook until onions are golden brown, about 12 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Spray a 5-by-8 baking dish with non-stick cooking spray. In a large bowl, combine zucchini noodles and cooked onion mixture. Pour into the baking dish and sprinkle cheese evenly on top.
5. Bake for approximately 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven, cool slightly, and serve. Garnish with fresh thyme if desired and drain off any excess liquid if necessary before serving.

Nutrition Information per serving: 199 calories; 8 g fat; 4 g carbohydrates; 4 g protein; 1 g fiber; 160 mg sodium.

