



## Sensible Philosophy

Sensible News aims to provide important health information that may not be readily available from conventional sources. Articles are factual. Any references not listed are available on request.

### In the News:

#### Too rapid weight gain in first few days of life leads to obesity later on

A new study in the journal of the American Heart Association found that each additional 100 grams of weight gained during the first week of life increased an individual's risk of becoming an overweight adult by about 10 per cent. The researchers concluded that breastfeeding is preferable because the early weight is gained much more slowly and steadily. (1)

#### New method for early detection of breast cancer

There may be an alternative to mammograms. Ductal lavage is a simple technique of collecting cells from the breast duct, kind of like a PAP smear for the breast (2). Ductal Lavage is not yet available in Australia.

[www.susanlovemd.com](http://www.susanlovemd.com) for more information.

*Comment: If it works, this is good news, because there are serious safety concerns about mammograms. (See Sensible News 12)*

Appointments at Sensible-Alternative Naturopathic Clinic are available weekdays 8am to 6pm. 12 Ridge St., North Sydney.  
Call: **02 9922 4009**

web: [www.sensible-alternative.com.au](http://www.sensible-alternative.com.au)

email: [lara@sensible-alternative.com.au](mailto:lara@sensible-alternative.com.au)

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## The osteoporosis myth

Fortunately, osteoporosis drugs such as Fosomax, Didronel, and Actonel are not yet as common in Australia as they are in North America, but let's keep it that way. If you are not already taking them, please think twice before starting.

We are told that osteoporosis is epidemic, but what is really epidemic is the diagnosis of "osteoporosis" in healthy people. According to Californian osteoporosis expert Dr. Bruce Ettinger, real "osteoporosis that causes pain and disability is a very rare disease." That has not changed. What has changed is the definition of osteoporosis. It used to be defined as a disease of recurring fracture in elderly women. In 1994, the definition was changed to mean low bone mineral density (BMD) compared with young women, virtually making it impossible for an older woman to have a normal diagnosis.

The term used for this new "osteoporosis" is osteopaenia, and the problem is that osteopaenia does not actually predict fracture. In fact, one study at the University of Leeds found that the majority of fractures in post-menopausal women (63%) occurred with higher bone density. (3). Bone is a living tissue, not inert calcium, and the chance of fracture depends on many factors, including the rate of remodeling and micro-architecture. Some experts believe that mineral density per se makes so little difference that it is not worth measuring. (3).

Despite very shaky evidence that osteopaenia is even a disease, millions of women have taken controversial medications to "treat" it. HRT was first, but now, it is the bisphosphonates, whose sales have skyrocketed in recent years to US\$2.7 billion worldwide.

According to the TGA, there were 1364 adverse reactions to bisphosphonates in Australia between 1997-2004 (4). Bisphosphonates can have very serious side effects such as throat ulcers and eye inflammation, and they usually produce digestive problems. The real clincher is that for all the side effects, they reduce the risk of hip fractures by just one percent (3). There are also concerns about the long-term consequences of taking the drugs. Because they suppress bone remodeling, they may actually produce bones that are more brittle.

**Further Reading:** *The Myth of Osteoporosis* by Gillian Sanson, MCD Century Publications 2003

## Cow's milk is not the answer

More milk equals more bone was a nice, simple idea, but research does not support it. Women are drinking more milk than ever but it is not helping. When 78,000 nurses were studied over 12 years, researchers found that those who drank more than a glass of milk per day actually had more hip fractures than those who drank less. (5) Archeological studies show that post-menopausal women in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, who drank less milk, had stronger bones than they do today (6). People who consume only 200mg calcium per day, such South Africans, have lower rates of osteoporotic fractures compared to western women (7).

Bone mineralisation and remodeling is a dynamic process that depends on **many aspects of health** including:

- total nutrition and proper absorption from the digestion
- adequate testosterone and progesterone

**It is NOT simply about calcium**, and it is definitely not about milk.

The problems with milk are:

- It is high in phosphorous, which depletes the body of minerals.
- It contains very little magnesium or trace minerals.
- Many people (especially Blood Type A) are sensitive to it, which will prevent proper absorption from the gut.

You still need calcium, but you can rely on **other sources of calcium**, such as: tahini, dulse, dark green vegetables, salmon with bones, raw nuts and seeds. Consider this: a cow does not drink milk.

Other minerals and nutrients are as equally as important as calcium. Be sure to get boron, which synergesis oestrogen's effect on bone, and Vitamin K, which is necessary to bind calcium to the living bone matrix. You also need magnesium, manganese, zinc, silica, and vitamins A, C, D. .

## Risk factors for osteoporosis

- Corticosteroid medication (or history of use)
- Small body frame
- Smoker (or history of being a smoker)
- Family history of osteoporosis and fracture
- Lack of sunlight exposure
- Bone mineral density less than 2.5 on a DEXA scan
- Age over 65

## Sensible plan to prevent Osteoporosis

- Increase weight-bearing exercise, especially in teenage years, when bone mineralisation is at its fastest.
- Do not smoke.
- Do not drink more than 5 alcoholic drinks per week.
- Reduce sugar.
- Reduce caffeine.
- Avoid, if possible, corticosteroid drugs, such as prednisone and some asthma puffers.
- Avoid stomach medications, which inhibit stomach acid. Acid is necessary for the absorption of minerals. There are other ways to treat gastritis and ulcer.
- Ensure adequate intake of the following, especially in teenage years:
  - Bone minerals: magnesium, boron, manganese, zinc and calcium
  - Vitamin K, found in leafy greens, and made by good bacteria in the gut
  - Vitamin D, with sunshine on non-sunscreen skin
- Avoid wheat because intolerance will prevent absorption of minerals and vitamins D and K (8)
- Eat onions. New research shows that phytonutrients in onions protects against bone loss (9). More research on herbs will be soon to follow.
- Check your progesterone and testosterone levels at menopause. If supplementation is necessary, use only bio-identical hormones.

### References:

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All articles written by Lara Grinevitch BSc, ND

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