

COPN NEWSLETTER : MARCH 2, 2007

Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis! It is important for you to continue with a program of a healthy diet, appropriate exercise/activity, calcium and vitamin D and/or prescription drugs as directed by your physician. If you do have a prescription, follow the directions.

COPN WEEKLY will come to you every second Friday. We hope you enjoy it and find the information useful. In the next few issues we will be running a series of questions and answers.

Questions and Answers:

Q: Why does cottage cheese have so much less calcium than other dairy products?



A: Cottage cheese retains only 25 to 50 percent of the calcium of the milk it is made from, since the curding procedure encourages the loss of calcium into the whey, which is then drained. Compared to milk, yoghurt, and other cheeses, most cottage cheese is only a modest source of calcium – about 75 mg for half a cup (dry curd has only about 35 mg.) The same amount of milk or yoghurt (half a cup) has about twice as much calcium – 150 to 200 mg. An ounce of most hard cheeses has about 200 mg. Osteoporosis Canada recommends that adults over 50 consume 1500 mg of calcium per day.

Regular low-fat or non-fat cottage cheese is still an excellent food. It's high in protein and when so labelled one of the few cheeses truly low in fat.

- Dr. Susan Whiting, PhD, Professor and Assistant Dean,
College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, University of Saskatchewan.

Funny Bone: Why Are Fire Trucks Red?

Fire trucks have four wheels and eight firefighters and four plus eight equals twelve. There are twelve inches in a foot. A foot is a ruler. Queen Elizabeth is a ruler, and the Queen Elizabeth is one of the largest ships on the seven seas. Seas have fish. Fish have fins. The Finns fought the Russians. The Russians are red. Fire trucks are always rushin'. Therefore, fire trucks are usually red!

If you think this is wild; you ought to hear some people trying to explain why they aren't doing their exercises.

What's happening in your area? COPN would like to know what is going on in your area that would be of interest to people living with osteoporosis. E-mail us at copn@osteoporosis.ca.

Information contained in COPN Newsletter is not intended to replace medical advice. Please discuss your individual circumstances with your physician.

COPN NEWSLETTER : MARCH 16, 2007

Questions and Answers:

Q: Is the ultrasound test that measures bone density in the heel bone an acceptable screening tool for osteoporosis? Is it recognized by the medical community in Canada? In terms of reliability, how does it compare to bone mineral density (BMD) testing?

A: With osteoporosis still a major and growing health concern for Canadians, new methods of assessment are always an important area of interest. Recent technology has developed an alternative technique- quantitative ultrasound (QUS) – that measures bone mineral density (BMD) in the heel and other bones. Several companies in Canada are offering this service privately, outside the provincial medicare system, for payment by the patient or a sponsor, such as a pharmacy. Osteoporosis Canada recognizes QUS as a useful tool, especially in areas where dual x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) is not available: it is inexpensive, portable, easy to use, and does not involve ionizing radiation (e.g. e-rays). But questions remain about how widespread a role it should play in assessing BMD.

The scientific community has raised concerns about the technological diversity, standards and instrument precision regarding these devices. Quality assurance is another issue: as yet, no formal training or accreditation process for commercial operators exists. Further, heel ultrasound detects fewer cases of osteoporosis than DXA and experts aren't sure how to deal with the discrepancy between results from the two tests. Many people who undergo ultrasound testing require additional DXA test later, leading to more expense and inconvenience. At this time, DXA remains the diagnostic "gold standard" for identifying individuals with osteoporosis. Moreover, QUS is not sufficiently sensitive to changes in bone structure to be used to monitor ongoing therapy for the disease.

-Dr. Anthony Hodzman, MBBS, FRCPC,
Professor, Department of Medicine,
University of Western Ontario.

Funny Bone: Some people think life begins at conception; others think it begins at birth. Still others know that life begins when the kids move out.

Remember: If your doctor has prescribed a medication for you don't forget to take it! If you have any questions about it talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

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COPN NEWSLETTER : MARCH 30, 2007

Questions and Answers:

Q: Should I be taking a magnesium supplement along with my calcium and vitamin D? What about calcium supplements with magnesium added? Are they better for my bones?

A: Although several firms market supplements with calcium and magnesium, there is **no evidence** that magnesium aids calcium absorption. Your priority should be to make sure you are getting the calcium and vitamin D you need, through your diet and/or supplementation. Osteoporosis Canada recommends 1500 mgs of calcium per day for adults over 50. Adults should get a minimum of 800 IUs (International Units) of vitamin D per day.



Most people don't need a magnesium supplement, since they are already consuming adequate amounts in their diet. If you are already taking a magnesium supplement, it is unlikely to cause you any harm. However, the major side effect of supplemental magnesium is diarrhoea – which you may find helpful if you find calcium supplements constipating.

- Dr. Susan Barr, Professor of Nutrition,
University of British Columbia

Funny Bone: The trouble with children is they're not returnable.

Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!

It is important for you to eat a **healthy diet**, get some appropriate **exercise**, take your **calcium and vitamin D** and if your doctor has prescribed a **medication** don't forget to take it as directed.

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