



Osteoporosis Canada

Ostéoporose Canada

# COPING

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*Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!*

## Safer Driving with Osteoporosis

*This article first appeared in our September 30, 2011 COPING Newsletter*

Osteoporosis can impact many activities of everyday life and none more so than driving a vehicle. If you or someone you love suffers from (or is at risk for) vertebral fractures, kyphosis (an exaggerated forward curvature of the upper back) or limited movement in their neck or spine, they may require modifications to their posture or their vehicle to make their driving safer and more comfortable.

There are several ways that our physical health can affect our driving. Physical changes associated with aging, osteoporosis and other medical conditions can make it difficult to get into and out of a vehicle or to drive comfortably for long periods of time. Changes in flexibility can make it difficult to shoulder check, watch for pedestrians, park and merge with oncoming traffic. Muscular strength is important for the safe control of the steering wheel as well as the gas and brake pedals.

Good positioning in the driver's seat is also important for comfortable, safe driving. The key to good body mechanics and posture is the proper alignment of the head, shoulders, spine, hips, knees and ankles. A balanced and supportive relationship between all these body parts puts less stress and pressure on the spine. Proper posture can also help to limit the amount of kyphosis, or forward curvature of the upper back, that can result from broken bones in the spine or from weak back muscles or both.

To maintain proper postural alignment while driving, try keeping your shoulders back so as to avoid having a slumped, head-forward posture, try to avoid bending forward from the waist, and try to avoid twisting of the spine. If these changes in posture are difficult to do, it may be because your seat needs to be adjusted. You might need a wedge cushion or back support to raise you up higher, and/or a lumbar supporting pillow behind your low back to make you more comfortable while improving your posture.

What's the optimal way to sit while driving? That question was answered by a study published in the *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*. After an exhaustive review of scientific journals and automotive engineering reports, here are the authors' recommendations:

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### Fracture TIP:

**Putting on a seat belt usually requires some rotation to get hold of the strap. To prevent too much twisting of the spine, especially if you have osteoporosis in the spine or a spine fracture, try to keep your head high and your spine tall as you turn your whole body, as one unit, from the hips.**

- The seat back should be almost straight up, at a 100-degree angle from the floor.
- The knees should be only slightly higher than the buttocks. If they are not, the back of your seat needs to be raised with a wedge cushion unless your seat adjusts upwards electronically.
- The head should tilt back very slightly (only 10 degrees).
- Preferably, the elbows should rest on the armrests while gripping the wheel with hands in the 9 and 3 o'clock positions (instead of at 10 and 2 o'clock) to avoid injuring the hands if the airbag deploys.

More significant adaptations may require the expert advice of an occupational therapist/ergonomist for equipment like seat lifts, adjustable seats and/or leg lifters.

#### Additional Tips:

- Make sure your back is aligned against the seat in an upright position and the headrest is supporting the middle of the back of your head and **not your neck**.
- Use a lumbar support pillow (or a rolled up towel) to make your seat more comfortable and to support your lower back.
- Adjust the seat and steering wheel to a comfortable position to avoid reaching, and to improve visibility.
- Consider using cruise control for long drives - resting both feet on the floor provides more support for your lower back.
- Get out of the car and stretch every 20-30 minutes, if possible.
- If back pain flares up while you're driving and you cannot stop and rest, apply a cold pack to the affected area. Wrap a small bag of ice in a towel and place it between your lower back and the seatback. Or if it feels better, alternate ice and heat from a disposable, portable heat pack every 15-20 minutes.
- If you are purchasing a new vehicle, consider one with an electronically adjustable driver's seat and heated seats.

*Reprinted with permission from Transportation Options Network for Seniors (TONS) and Gwen Howe, TONS Program Coordinator.*

If you have questions about this article or any other aspect of osteoporosis, please call **toll-free** 1-800-463-6842 (416-696-2663 in the Greater Toronto Area) to speak to an information counsellor.

## Osteoporosis Canada – 2015 Volunteer Award Recipients

Osteoporosis Canada is a national organization supported by a significant number of passionate and dedicated volunteers. Annually, in conjunction with their National Annual General Meeting, a number of these volunteers are recognized for their noteworthy contributions to the organization through the National Awards Program: Eleanor Mills Inspiration Award, Volunteer of Distinction Award and Backbone Awards.

*The Eleanor Mills Inspiration Award honours those special Osteoporosis Canada volunteers who, like Eleanor, have embraced their own osteoporosis and by doing so, have inspired others with their determination, perseverance and optimism, and have given of themselves to champion the osteoporosis cause.*

This year the Eleanor Mills Inspiration Award was presented to **Ina Ilse**, who has been a dedicated and passionate volunteer with the organization for almost 20 years. Ina began her volunteer service with Osteoporosis Canada in 1995 as an information counsellor on the 1-800 line, providing information and emotional support to callers. She was herself diagnosed with osteoporosis in 1994, after having suffered

numerous fractures. She was therefore able to respond to callers with extraordinary empathy and a personal understanding of what the caller is going through.

One of the four founding members of the Canadian Osteoporosis Patient Network (COPN), Ina continues to work with COPN. Ina's involvement in COPN, and in particular her work with the newsletter, has contributed to the growth of COPN from the original four members to well over 8,000 today. She is a very astute and observant editor and is a member of the Coping review committee, which edits all material published in the newsletter. She has also contributed articles, such as an excellent one on dressing your best with osteoporosis. The success of Coping is such that the International Osteoporosis Foundation has reprinted or provided links to some of the articles in Coping, and Ina has been an integral part of this success.

Ina's personal story of her struggles with osteoporosis and osteoporotic fractures has been published on the Osteoporosis Canada website, in the Coping newsletter, and in a special insert in Canadian Health, a consumer magazine published by the Canadian Medical Association. People fear osteoporosis and the limitations it might impose on their life. Reading Ina's story, seeing her indomitable spirit and her refusal to let osteoporosis and fractures stop her from doing the things she loves – gardening, carpentry, playing guitar, enjoying her grandchildren and walking her dog Toby – gives hope to those who have been diagnosed and are fearful of their future.

***The Volunteer of Distinction Award*** honours a volunteer whose long standing volunteer service has succeeded in building the capacity of the National organization, and/or one of its Chapters, the COPN, the SAC, or the National Board, and who has provided ongoing, outstanding leadership in numerous capacities within the organization.

The 2015 recipient of this award was **Sheila Brien**, who has volunteered with the organization since 2004. She is one of the founding members of the Canadian Osteoporosis Patient Network (COPN) and remains a passionate member of the COPN Executive Committee. Her dedication to making life better for people with osteoporosis and osteoporotic fractures has never wavered.

Sheila served as a member of the National Education Committee from 2007-2010, whose goals included providing assistance, support, advice and guidance to the development of new educational resources for the general public and revision of existing ones; ensuring consistency of messaging; and enhancing the capacity of Osteoporosis Canada to provide credible national public education programs and resources.

She also volunteered for four years on the Patient Working Group (2010-2014), which was responsible for the Make Your First Break Your Last campaign and all the supportive materials: Breaking News on Broken Bones campaign; Stand Tall Canada campaign and clinics; After the Fracture web document and the Too Fit to Fracture promotional card.

She currently serves on the COPN Executive Committee and is a patient representative to the Scientific Advisory Council's Vertebral Fractures Guidelines Committee.

Through her extraordinary commitment to COPN, her contribution to developing public education materials, in particular but not exclusively the After the Fracture document, and her willingness to share her story of osteoporosis and fractures, Sheila is truly an inspiration to everyone.

***The Backbone Award*** is presented annually by Osteoporosis Canada to active volunteers who have served for

*at least two years and who are considered integral to the Organization (for example, they are originators of ideas, developers of successful projects, motivators, leaders by example, etc.). These individuals have provided leadership and inspiration to other volunteers and have proven their dedication to Osteoporosis Canada and its activities. Recipients of this award must demonstrate the spirit of volunteerism through their on-going actions. Several of these awards can be presented annually, but only one nomination per leadership group (Chapter, Branch, COPN, SAC, Board of Directors, and National Office) is eligible to receive the award in any given year.*

## **2015 Backbone Award Recipients are:**

### **Shirley Arnold – Langley Branch, British Columbia**

Shirley is the Chair of the Langley Branch in British Columbia and has been a volunteer with Osteoporosis Canada for seven years. She works closely with the Langley Senior Centre and arranges for speakers on a variety of informative and interesting topics to be presented at monthly meetings. Shirley understands the need for osteoporosis awareness and education and never misses an opportunity to impart her knowledge and expertise to others. Shirley understands the importance of teamwork and ensures that the monthly meetings are both fun and informative for the volunteers and attendees.

Shirley also volunteers and assists in the annual fundraiser for the Surrey White Rock Chapter.

### **Andrea Bedard – Manitoba Chapter**

Andrea began her volunteer service with the Manitoba Chapter in 2000. She is an active member of the Education Committee and also sits on the Manitoba Chapter Executive Committee. She willingly shares her knowledge and expertise with all. She does presentations at the Chapter's public forums, for small groups, for healthcare professionals, and for new volunteers.

Andrea is an Osteoporosis Canada ambassador of the highest calibre. From training allied health professionals to working with residents of personal care homes, Andrea encourages one and all to include safe exercise in their activities of daily living as a way to manage their osteoporosis or to build and maintain strong bones. As a teacher of kinesiology and applied health at the University of Winnipeg, Andrea ensures that her students are knowledgeable about osteoporosis, and that they understand the importance of balance training in the prevention of falls.

Andrea supports the Chapter in many ways: attending fundraising events with family and friends, and attending and volunteering at Public Education Forums and other education events. Andrea's significant contribution of her time and talents to the Chapter with no expectation of reward or acknowledgment embodies the spirit of volunteerism.

### **Joyce Ford – National Office**

Joyce has been a volunteer with Osteoporosis Canada for more than 17 years. She is a knowledgeable and reliable information counsellor on the 1-800 line responding to the questions and concerns of callers and sending out appropriate printed materials to clients. Joyce also acts as reception back-up and willingly takes on other tasks around the office, when not on a counselling call. Joyce consented to sharing her story of volunteering, which appears in the 2012-2013 Osteoporosis Canada's Annual Report.

Her consistent, reliable, and long-standing fulfillment of her volunteer role stands as an example to others.

### **Brenda Payne – National Board of Directors**

Brenda has been an active volunteer on the national Board of Directors for five years and is actively serving as the Chair of the Board Development Committee. As chair and member of this committee, Brenda has been instrumental in bringing the board nomination process up to date, streamlining it and putting well-vetted interview procedures in place.

Brenda has been key in moving the board and all committees towards full procedural documentation. The national board has benefited from Brenda's vast knowledge of board procedures and government workings. She is a motivator, encouraging all board members to participate and be respectful of all.

Brenda demonstrates the spirit of volunteerism by always coming prepared to the board meetings. Brenda is a dedicated and responsible volunteer who always gives and never fails to complete the tasks at hand.

### **Dr. Irene Polidoulis – SAC (Scientific Advisory Council)**

Irene has been volunteering with Osteoporosis Canada for more than five years. She is currently a member of the Scientific Advisory Council and has worked on several ad hoc committees and task groups including the Knowledge Translation Working Group for the 2010 Guidelines, the Patient Working Group, and the Fracture Liaison Services Task Group. Irene is a passionate volunteer who has logged many hundreds of hours each year as the Medical Advisor to the Executive Committee of COPN. She also chaired the Scientific Advisory Council Review Committee for COPN's newsletter, and ensured that each and every article was medically sound and written in a way that all can understand.

Irene is a tireless volunteer and advocate for patient rights. Irene's dedication to osteoporosis patients goes beyond the activities described above. She brings an equal passion to her professional life outside of OC/COPN. In 2013 she received the Excellence in Creative Professional Activity Award for creative excellence and professional innovation in osteoporosis from the Department of Family & Community Medicine, University of Toronto.

Credibility and respect. These two words summarize how Irene's contributions have benefited the organization. Her enthusiasm, her diligence and a personal drive for perfection have significantly enhanced COPN's reputation as the leading source of credible, patient-focused information on osteoporosis. The breadth of the many volunteer roles Irene has undertaken over the past five years exemplifies her spirit of volunteerism. She is an exceptionally dedicated volunteer. She gives without expecting anything in return and her contributions are always thoughtful and from the heart.

### **Dr. Susan Whiting – Saskatoon Chapter**

Dr. Whiting has worked as a volunteer with the Saskatoon Chapter for over 10 years and is also a member of the Scientific Advisory Council. She is an active participant in the Saskatoon Chapter Executive meetings and encourages all members and staff to participate in the chapter activities. Dr. Whiting is a professor of nutrition at the University of Saskatchewan. Through her research, she is able to keep the chapter volunteers up to date on new developments in nutrition. She is always willing to present nutrition information to clients and volunteers and to stay after her presentations to answer questions. She shares this information informally at chapter meetings as needed or at public forums as a speaker.

Dr. Whiting is committed to finding ways to address the financial needs of the chapter, attending meetings and consultant group activities even though she has a busy professional agenda with the university as well. To this activity alone, she had donated over 350 hours over the last four years. In April, she led the way to promoting member donations to meet the majority of the chapter needs, stepping forward with the first member donation and showing by example to the rest of the members the need for them to follow suit.

## Dr. Lora Giangregorio receives Bloomberg Manulife Prize for the Promotion of Active Health

Dr. Lora Giangregorio, professor of kinesiology at the University of Waterloo, a member of Osteoporosis Canada's Scientific Advisory Council, and a leading author of the new exercise guidelines featured in *Too Fit to Fracture: Managing Osteoporosis through Exercise* and related resources, has been awarded a prestigious \$50,000 prize for the promotion of active health. She is the first woman to receive this award, intended for future research. To read the story in the *Waterloo Region Record*, click here: <http://www.therecord.com/news-story/6136098-waterloo-researcher-awarded-50-000-prize/>.

## FUNNY BONE: Some mistakes are too much fun to only make once.

### A Recipe from our Sponsor

#### Poached Monkfish with Walnut Sauce

Course: *Main Dishes*

Preparation Time: 20 mins

Cooking Time: 6 mins

Yields: 4 to 6 servings

1/2 milk product serving(s) per person

**Calcium:** 17% DV/189 mg

Creamy walnut sauce comes from the Italian province of Liguria, where it is called "salsa di noci." Traditionally served with pasta, it is nonetheless a versatile sauce that does wonders for fish like halibut or monkfish, as in this recipe.



**For more information about this recipe:**  
<http://www.dairygoodness.ca/getenough/recipes/poached-monkfish-with-walnut-sauce>

## Ingredients

### Sauce:

3/4 cup (180 mL) walnuts  
2 tbsp (30 mL) **Butter**  
1 garlic clove, minced  
3 tbsp (45 mL) fresh breadcrumbs  
1/4 cup (60 mL) **Canadian Ricotta**  
2 tbsp (30 mL) **Canadian Parmesan**, grated  
1/2 cup (125 mL) **Milk**  
Freshly ground salt and pepper

6 - 3 oz (90 g) pieces of monkfish or halibut  
2 cups (500 mL) **Milk**  
1 bay leaf  
12 crimini mushrooms, sliced  
1/4 tsp (1 mL) garlic, minced  
2 tbsp (30 mL) **Butter**  
Flat parsley leaves

## Preparation

Place walnuts in a small saucepan and cover with boiling water. Bring to a full boil and cook 1 min. Remove from the heat, cover and set aside 3 min at room temperature. Drain and reserve.

In a skillet, melt butter and sweat garlic 1 min. Chop walnuts finely and add to the skillet with remaining sauce ingredients. Cook over medium heat for 3 min, stirring constantly.

Transfer the mixture to a deep straight-sided container and puree with an immersion blender. Season to taste and adjust consistency with extra milk, if needed.

In a large skillet heat the second quantity of milk, 1 cup (250 mL) of water and the bay leaf. Season with salt and pepper.\* Bring to a bare simmer for 5 min.

Place the fish in the hot poaching liquid and poach for about 6 min or until cooked.

Meanwhile, brown mushrooms and garlic in the second quantity of butter and season with salt and pepper.

Using a skimmer, remove fish from poaching liquid.

Transfer to warm dinner plates and top with a dollop of hot walnut sauce. Garnish with mushrooms and parsley.

\*Before cooking the fish, you might want to stir a generous pinch of powdered saffron into the poaching liquid, which will add flavour and colour. Powdered saffron is sold in packets at specialty groceries.

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