



Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!

COPN Advocacy

The launch of the Osteoporosis Patient Bill of Rights was first announced in the October 1, 2010 issue of Coping. We thought it was time to revisit this important document.

Osteoporosis Patient Bill of Rights

All Canadians have the right to live without osteoporotic fractures. Bones weakened by osteoporosis break easily. These osteoporotic fractures can have devastating health consequences including pain, decreased quality of life, loss of independence and even death. Because osteoporotic fractures are preventable:

We believe that all Canadians, wherever they live, have the right to effective bone care and fracture prevention programs that include:

- Regular, comprehensive assessments of the risk of bone fractures;
- Timely bone mineral density testing; and
- Medications that are proven to reduce the risk of fractures.

We believe that every Canadian who has experienced an osteoporotic fracture has a right to post-fracture care programs that include:

- Timely care and treatment including adequate pain control;
- Assessment of risks for future falls and fractures;
- Education about osteoporosis; and
- Self-management tools and strategies to reduce the risks of future fractures.

[Download](#) a poster version of the Osteoporosis Canada Patient Bill of Rights

The Importance of Advocacy

When you or a loved one are faced with an illness, such as osteoporosis, your initial reaction may be shock and you may ask yourself, “how did this happen to me?” Once you have come to terms with your illness, it is important to get all the information you need and to take the necessary steps to make sure that you or your loved one are getting the best possible care. Our Osteoporosis Patient Bill of Rights acts as a guide to help you understand the type of care you should be receiving. If you are not receiving the best possible care you have the right to speak up and when you do so this is called advocacy. According to the Canadian Oxford Dictionary, advocacy is a

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Fracture Fact:

As Canada's baby boomers continue to age, the impact of osteoporosis is only set to increase unless Canada develops a systematic approach to reducing osteoporotic fractures.

verbal support or argument for a cause or a policy. Quite simply, it is telling your story to someone who can help make a difference. In the case of health care, that usually means speaking to the right people in government. It is a process that can take a long time to see the changes you would like and there is no one way to go about advocating. It is personal to your own style and comfort level, and can give you a sense of empowerment by taking some form of control and initiating some type of action around an issue that matters to you.

Advocacy is also based on two fundamental things:

- your ability to tell your personal story, and
- the establishment and nurturing of relationships with those who have the ability to make a change.

You may initially be concerned or nervous if you've never before told your story about the challenges you may be facing living with osteoporosis, or if you don't currently have any relationships with people in government. Both will get easier with time and practice. It is important to remember that without these two things, your ability to advocate effectively will be limited.

So why is advocacy important? The easiest answer, as the saying goes, is because the squeaky wheel gets the grease. Or rather, key decision-makers react to those credible groups or individuals who most effectively bring their issues to the forefront of the public agenda. But advocacy is also important because the alternative, not doing anything, is really no alternative at all. Inaction has never led to change or progress.

There are two different kinds of advocacy: personal and issue-based. Personal advocacy is the typical way one starts to get involved. An issue that affects you or a loved one, such as those described in the Osteoporosis Patient Bill of Rights, compels you to take action. You're not looking to change the world, you just want to improve your situation. It's out of this personal need, though, that some people start to realize that they have an opportunity to bring about larger public policy change by advocating for a broader based issue. They realize that by getting involved in issue-based advocacy they can not only help themselves, but help others who can't make their voices heard.

With that brief background in mind, you can now start preparing to advocate. As with most things in life, preparation is essential in advocacy. You need to have a clear understanding of the issues that you want to raise and the decision-makers in government that you need to contact. The more focused your issues are, and the fewer of them you have, the more likely you are to be successful. Again, you can use the Osteoporosis Patient Bill of Rights as your guide, but be sure to only focus on one issue at a time. As you are preparing, take the time to write out your personal story. It usually helps to get it down on paper first. Whatever your situation, as a patient living with osteoporosis, you have a unique story to tell about the issues and challenges faced from your perspective. Make sure that you capture your thoughts and feelings. As noted earlier, it will be fundamental to your advocacy activities. If you are interested in becoming involved in advocacy, please contact your local Chapter. Each province is working with Osteoporosis Canada to identify the issues that would help improve osteoporosis care and is developing an advocacy strategy to seek the necessary changes to address those issues. They would love to hear from you.

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.

Is Building Better Bones On Your Bucket List?



If so, we need you! COPN is now 8,500 members strong. Our goal is to reach 10,000 members in 2016 and raise our numbers across Canada. We know that 1 in 3 women and 1 in 5 men will suffer from an osteoporotic fracture in their lifetime. We need your support to reach out to people in your community to encourage people to join COPN and help others live well with osteoporosis!

We are looking for enthusiastic COPN members to become COPN Advocates.

The only qualification is that you are passionate about COPN and what it offers:

- The latest evidence-based information on medical research and osteoporosis care with rapid responses to media headlines.
- Inspiring personal stories from others who are affected by and living well with osteoporosis.
- The assurance that all information provided by COPN is vetted by Canada's foremost osteoporosis experts, the Scientific Advisory Council of Osteoporosis Canada.
- Practical information on nutrition, exercise, safe movements, fall prevention and much, much more.

To get more information on how to get ready and begin reaching out, please contact COPN at

copn@osteoporosis.ca

We make a difference! You can too!

FUNNY BONE:

Great Truths from Little Children:

- **No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize a cat.**
- **When your Mom is mad at your Dad don't let her brush your hair.**
- **School lunches can stick to the wall.**

Too Fit to Fracture: User Survey

Osteoporosis Canada launched the *Too Fit to Fracture* initiative in June 2014 to promote new recommendations on exercise for people with osteoporosis. Over the last year and a half, we have worked with experts to develop tools to help you exercise in a way that is safe and helpful. Now we want to hear from you to get a sense of what you found useful and what you did not so that we can develop better tools in the future. Please take a few moments to complete our brief survey online at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9KWQKNF>

BONE MATTERS: Getting the Most from Your Healthcare Appointment

Originally aired: Tuesday, February 16, 2016

Did you miss our recent live *Bone Matters* presentation featuring information how to make your healthcare appointments work for you? Andrea Martin and Darren Robbins of the Self-Management Program at the South West Community Care Access Centre shared their tips and advice on how to prepare for appointments, communicate effectively with your doctor, and other things to consider to help you be involved in your treatment. [Click here to watch the archive presentation.](#)

Did you watch this presentation? Tell us about your thoughts and experiences [here.](#)

A Recipe from our Sponsor

Lemon Date Rice Pudding

Course: *Desserts & Sweets*

Preparation Time: *10 mins*

Cooking Time: *45 mins*

Yields: *4 to 6 servings*

1/2 milk product serving(s) per person

Calcium: 15% DV/ 160 mg

Rice pudding scented with cinnamon gets a new twist with brown rice, a touch of lemon and the natural sweetness of dates. The rice cooks right in the milk and soaks all of the nutrients in while it makes a nice, thick pudding. It's a particularly fitting dessert to serve after a Mediterranean-inspired meal.



For more information about this recipe:

<http://www.dairygoodness.ca/getenough/recipes/lemon-date-rice-pudding>

Ingredients

1/2 cup (125 mL) short-grain brown rice
1 tbsp (15 mL) whole wheat flour
1/4 tsp (1 mL) ground cinnamon
1/8 tsp (.5 mL) salt
3 cups (750 mL) **milk**

1/4 cup (60 mL) finely chopped dates
2 tsp (10 mL) grated lemon zest, divided
1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla extract
Ground cinnamon

Preparation

In a deep saucepan, combine rice, whole wheat flour, cinnamon and salt; stir in milk. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring often.

Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, for about 30 minutes until rice is almost tender. Stir in dates; cover and simmer, stirring often, for about 15 minutes or until rice is tender.

Remove from heat and stir in 1-1/2 tsp (7 mL) of the lemon zest and the vanilla. Cover and let stand to cool slightly and thicken (it will thicken considerably upon cooling). Serve warm or let cool completely. Serve sprinkled with remaining lemon zest and additional cinnamon.

Tips

Milk tends to bubble up when simmered in a covered pot so use a deep pot and check frequently while cooking the pudding to avoid a messy boil-over.

If the pudding gets too thick after cooling, stir in a little more milk to thin to desired consistency when serving.

If your family isn't used to the texture of brown rice, start out using half brown rice and half Arborio rice, adding the Arborio after the brown rice simmers for about 15 minutes. Then gradually increase the proportion of brown rice each time you cook it until you're using all brown rice.

This issue of COPING is sponsored by Dairy Farmers of Canada

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These newsletters are not intended to replace individualized medical advice. Readers are advised to discuss their specific circumstances with their healthcare provider.



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