



Osteoporosis Canada

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COPING

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Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!

The Consequences of a Fracture

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Fracture Fact:

At least 1 in 3 women and 1 in 5 men will break a bone from osteoporosis during their lifetime.

Have you ever said to yourself, “If I fracture (break a bone), it will be painful but it will heal and all will be well”? If you have, you are not alone. I talk to people who call the Osteoporosis Canada 1-800 information line with questions about their broken bones. Some callers say that they are not worried because they are confident they will fully recover, and for those who do not have osteoporosis that may well be the case. But for one in three women and one in five men who will fracture because they have osteoporosis, unless they are properly assessed for their future fracture risk and take effective treatment to prevent more fractures, they may well have a lifetime of broken bone after broken bone. If you have fractured, don’t make any assumptions - have your fracture risk assessed by your doctor!

In this article I draw from my personal experience to explain why everyone should be anxious to do all they can to avoid the consequences of repeated osteoporotic fractures.

Let us compare our bones to tree branches. If the tree is strong and healthy, the branches will be also. The wind and storms can come and play havoc with the branches but once the storm is over all will be well. The tree may have suffered a few bruises or some torn branches but no serious long-term damage occurred. That is because the branches are strong and flexible and can withstand the trauma.

Now take a tree that was unable to get the nourishment that it needed and became weak and less flexible. Here, if there is a storm or wind, the branches will not be able to withstand the pressure since they are already structurally weak. These branches may crack or break even if the storm is not severe. Damaged branches of unhealthy trees will not grow or fully heal, resulting in deformities and permanent weakness.

If you have osteoporosis, your bones could be fragile like the branches on the tree that are weak and can break easily.

Fractures can be **very** painful and at times the healing process can be lengthy. They may cause one to lose some or all of one’s independence for some time and, depending on the type of fracture sustained, one may lose one’s independence entirely! If you break an arm, bathing or dressing yourself may be an impossible task. You will be exhausted from just trying to do it.

In many cases of osteoporotic fractures of the arm or other bone, you may need surgery in order for it to heal properly. In some circumstances, it may even be necessary for a plate to be inserted to keep the bones in place as osteoporotic bones have poor structure and need to be stabilized. Sometimes large pins will need to be inserted in the bone to keep it in place. These pins in themselves move along with any movements that you make and in some cases can cause excruciating pain. I have experienced this on three occasions and I hope never to experience it again!

Once the broken bone has healed, it may be very good; however, with some complicated breaks, the bone may never be the same. In some cases, doing all the things you did previously is no longer possible.

Fractures of long bones like your leg bones or a hip fracture will most certainly cause considerable pain and discomfort and a loss of independence for quite some time. It will be extremely difficult to find a comfortable position to sit or lie down because the pain will be a constant companion. Medication can provide some limited relief from the pain but may not completely eliminate it. Pain can make you very tired, so even attempting to use crutches (no easy task) will be so exhausting that you will often give up before you master their use.

Breaking a hip can have devastating and long-term consequences. Only 44% of people discharged from hospital for a hip fracture return home; of the rest, 10% go to another hospital, 27% go to rehabilitation care, and 17% go to long-term care facilities. Also their chance of breaking another bone within a year increases significantly.

Many people do not take osteoporosis seriously; they consider it an inevitable part of aging. But as I have demonstrated, osteoporosis and its fractures can have severe and long-lasting consequences. However, do not get discouraged. There are many things you can do to reduce the risk of those nasty fractures and live well with osteoporosis. Osteoporosis Canada has many resources to help you ensure you are getting enough calcium and vitamin D, doing the appropriate exercises, and taking medication if necessary. And, of course, this newsletter *Coping* has a wealth of up-to-date information.

They can also help you if you have had a fracture. To find out more about what to expect when you suffer a fracture, go to After the Fracture, <http://www.osteoporosis.ca/after-the-fracture/introduction>. For nutrition information, go to http://www.osteoporosis.ca/wp-content/uploads/OC_Nutrition_October_2012.pdf, for exercise <http://www.osteoporosis.ca/osteoporosis-and-you/too-fit-to-fracture/> and for drug treatments, http://www.osteoporosis.ca/wp-content/uploads/Drug_Treatments_September_2013_EN.pdf.

Mark Your Calendar:

BONE MATTERS

Take charge of your bone health

**Frequently Asked Questions
about Osteoporosis**

Suzanne Morin, MD, MSc, FRCPC

Chair, Scientific Advisory Council, Osteoporosis Canada

Wednesday, November 22, 1 – 2 pm ET

More information to follow in the next issue of *Coping*.

Missed the last Bone Matters with Dr. Rowena Ridout on Cancer and Osteoporosis?

[Click here](#) to watch the archived version.

We Welcome Your Feedback

- Have a question?
- Is there an osteoporosis-related topic that you would like to see featured in the newsletter?
- Looking for a great volunteer opportunity?

Please contact us by calling Osteoporosis Canada's toll-free number **1-800-463-6842** or emailing copn@osteoporosis.ca.

You Make My Life Better!

There are times when someone is particularly helpful with small acts of kindness that make my life better, easier, or just more pleasant. At other times, someone goes out of their way with huge efforts to make my life better.

At those times, I wish I could let that person know that their action was thoughtful and much appreciated with more than just a verbal "thank you."

"You Make My Life Better" is an award you can give to people who make your life better as you live well with osteoporosis. As members of COPN, you can nominate a person for such an award by filling out a simple nomination form. Once your nomination is received by the COPN office staff, your nominee will be sent a "You Make My Life Better" certificate on your behalf to congratulate him or her. A letter will accompany the certificate that will include your personal note that explains what they did that made your life better.

To access a nomination form, click [here](#).

Build Your Bone Health Knowledge in Richmond Hill!

Are you in the **Richmond Hill, ON** area and want to learn more about how you can live well with osteoporosis? Come attend a **free** community education event featuring a range of osteoporosis health care providers from Southlake Regional Health Centre, including a doctor, a pharmacist, a dietitian, an occupational therapist and a kinesiologist.

Thursday November 16th, 2017

Bayview Hill Community Centre – Program Room
(114 Spadina Road, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 2Y9)
Doors open at 6:30p.m. Event is from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30p.m.

Space is limited, so make sure to RSVP today!
Please RSVP by: November 12th, 2017
RSVP to: RSVPEVENT@osteoporosis.ca
or call **1-800-263-6842 ext. 2480**

This event is presented by Southlake Regional Health Centre, Osteoporosis Canada and Ontario Osteoporosis Strategy

FUNNY BONE:

Hiring someone to write your autobiography is like hiring someone to take a bath for you. – Mae West

A Recipe from our Sponsor

Curried Parsnip and Apple Soup

Course: *Soups & Creams*

Preparation Time: *20 mins*

Cooking Time: *30 mins*

Yields: *4 servings*

1/2 milk product serving(s) per person

Calcium: 20% DV/ 224 mg

The curry spices and ginger combine with parsnips and apples into beautiful soup – both in colour and in taste. The milk smoothes out the spices and lends a creamy texture, and the lime and cilantro add a fresh touch. Serve this as a starter to a curry meal, or with a chicken sandwich for lunch.



For more information about this recipe:

<https://www.dairygoodness.ca/getenough/recipes/curried-parsnip-and-apple-soup>

Ingredients

1 tbsp (15 mL) **butter**
1 onion, chopped
2 tsp (10 mL) minced gingerroot
1 tsp (5 mL) curry powder
3 cups (750 mL) chopped parsnips (about 1 lb/500 g)
2 tart apples, peeled and chopped
1 oblong baking or all-purpose potato, peeled and diced
1/4 to 1/2 tsp (1 to 2 mL) salt
Pepper
3 cups (750 mL) low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
2 tbsp (30 mL) whole wheat flour
2 cups (500 mL) **milk**
2 to 4 tbsp (30 to 60 mL) freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice
Chopped fresh cilantro
2 tbsp (30 mL) sliced almonds, toasted

Preparation

In a pot, melt butter over medium heat. Sauté onion for 3 minutes or until starting to soften. Add ginger and curry powder; sauté for about 2 minutes or until onions are softened. Stir in parsnips, apples, potato, 1/4 tsp (1 mL) each salt and pepper, and broth. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat.

Reduce heat to medium-low, cover and boil gently, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until vegetables are soft.

Whisk flour into milk and stir into pot. Use an immersion blender in the pot or transfer soup to a blender or food processor, in batches, and purée until smooth.

Return to pot, if necessary. Heat over medium heat, stirring often, for about 5 minutes or until slightly thickened. Drizzle in 2 tbsp (30 mL) lime or lemon juice while stirring. Season with more lime juice, if desired, and up to 1/4 tsp (1 mL) more salt and pepper to taste.

Ladle soup into warmed bowls and sprinkle with cilantro and almonds.

Tips

When chopping the parsnips, trim out any tough, woody cores and discard. They don't become tender with cooking and will make for a stringy texture in the soup.

A tart apple that keeps its flavour when cooked is best for this soup. Try McIntosh, Empire, Crispin or Granny Smith.

Baking potatoes (such as oblong russet potatoes) or all-purpose potatoes work best in puréed soups because they thicken the soup without adding a gluey texture. Avoid round, waxy or new potatoes for the best texture.

To toast almonds, toast in a dry skillet over medium heat, stirring constantly for about 4 minutes or until golden and fragrant. Immediately transfer to a bowl and let cool.



Nutrition Tip

Add two containers of yogurt to your lunch box: one for your snack and the other for your lunch.

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.

