

***Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!***

# The Day my Life was Turned Upside Down

*By Ina Ilse*

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### **Fracture Fact:**

Wrist fractures are the most common fragility fractures, especially for women under age 75, and are often the first sign of underlying osteoporosis.

*Ina's story was originally published in Coping, September 3, 2010. It is still a timely reminder of the potentially devastating effects of an osteoporotic fracture and the importance of being aware.*

My name is Ina and I hope that my story will help others understand the seriousness of osteoporosis and the consequences of an osteoporotic fracture, and what you can do to make sure you don't suffer the same fate as I did.

I was diagnosed with osteoporosis in 1994 after having numerous rib fractures. My fractures were very spontaneous. A hug, opening a heavy door or picking up my little dog was all it took to crack a rib. This went on for several years before I finally consulted my doctor. He sent me to an endocrinologist who diagnosed me with severe osteoporosis.

I was put on an osteoporosis medication and did well enough that I had no more fractures for more than 10 years.

Unfortunately, when one is enjoying good health, one becomes careless, as I did, because my next fracture was totally preventable. After cleaning the snow off the driveway I rushed to get back inside. However, I was wearing a pair of shoes that were at least two sizes too large and the laces were not tied. When I got to a mound of ice (which I knew about) right next to my front steps, my feet went out from under me. I landed on my arm and snapped the radius in two.

The pain I had to endure while waiting in the local emergency department was nothing compared to the pain I felt four days later, when I had a rod and seven screws surgically placed into my arm. After I recovered from this, I vowed that I would never be so careless again!

On March 3, 2010, I took my little dog for a stroll. It was a lovely warm and sunny day, so I wore smooth-soled shoes because I thought that there would be no snow or ice

on the ground. As we walked up a slope, I was slipping a bit. I should have heeded this warning and turned back, but I thought that I could handle it, and continued up the slope. When I got to the top, I looked back down and realized what I was doing!

I started down, walking in part on all fours backwards until I felt safer, but I was not home-free yet. A few more steps and my feet suddenly flew out from under me and I landed flat on my back on solid ice. My arms flew open like a pair of wings and when my left arm hit the ground, it was like a gun shot. I sat down on the curb and looked at my "S"-shaped arm and swore. This accident was totally preventable, if only I had not taken any chances!

The experience that followed over the next few weeks was pure hell! No amount of pain killers could relieve the pain. Two weeks after this fracture I had pins surgically put in to hold the bones in position for a total of seven weeks. My treatment by the medical staff was fantastic, but the pain was horrendous. All movements caused excruciating pain. After I washed I had to sit flat on the bathroom floor to dress (it was the only way I could manage). I was exhausted and the pain was a nightmare. For the simplest of tasks, I had to give myself lots of time. I could only sleep at night if I was very heavily sedated and that made me feel sick the next day. I could not find a comfortable position for my arm and I tried many things to distract myself from the pain, but I could focus on nothing else.

Not only did I have to endure pain, but I also lost my freedom. I could go nowhere unless someone else did the driving and when I did go out, I could not wait to get back home to hide with my pain! I felt very discouraged. I usually am very careful at home not to have items on the floor that would cause anyone to trip or fall, and I don't climb up on any furniture to reach high places, but that is not enough. Now, when I go outside in the winter, I will wear low rubber-soled well-fitting boots with good treads that will keep me firmly on the ground. If there is any ice or snow on the ground I will only go out if absolutely necessary. The same rules will apply if there are wet leaves on the ground as they are very slippery also. Even during the summer, I will think twice before walking up a hill unless I am wearing good quality shoes with good soles; if I am unsure about a surface I am walking on, if it's too bumpy or just doesn't look right, I will just not go there!

It is now some time since I fractured my arm. I am gardening, doing carpentry and playing my guitar - all the things that I took for granted before this fracture. As horrible as this experience was for me, and as much as I blame my carelessness for it, I consider myself lucky because when I fell, I could have broken my hip and/or my back, and then where would I be?

I hope that by telling you my story, I have helped you understand that osteoporosis can be devastating when you have a fracture. We can live well with osteoporosis as long as we are sensible about what we do.

Some other tips:

- 1) If you have osteoporosis, tell your children to ask their doctor about getting themselves checked for osteoporosis risk factors when they reach age 50 (if they are over 50 and haven't been assessed for osteoporosis, they are overdue for that visit with their doctor).
- 2) Your bone mineral density test results do not have to show osteoporosis for you to be at high risk for getting a fracture. If you are elderly, or have other risk factors, you can still fracture easily, especially if you fall. Ask your doctor for a fracture risk assessment.

I wish you all a fracture-free life even if you are living with osteoporosis.

## 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](mailto:copn@osteoporosis.ca).

## *Do You Know Your Risk?*

Osteoporosis is a degenerative bone disease that can affect men, women, and sometimes children. It is characterized by the deterioration of bone tissue causing low bone density, and ultimately predisposing one to an increased risk of fracture. Unfortunately, until one fractures, osteoporosis can be without any symptoms.

If the disease is not diagnosed and treated, over time the bones grow more porous and fragile. All too often a simple fall (from standing height or less) will result in a fracture. Or, sudden twisting, forward bending and lifting may cause a vertebral fracture. Regrettably, a broken bone can be the first sign of osteoporosis. Do you know what your risk of having or acquiring osteoporosis is? Do you want someone you know to assess their risk?

Though your first fracture may be a sign of osteoporosis, ideally, you want to know your risk [long before you fracture](#). If you know that you are at risk of osteoporosis, you and your doctor can work on a lifestyle plan that may include treatment and the expertise of other professionals such as a physiotherapist and a dietitian to improve your bone health.

Research has discovered a number of risk factors for osteoporosis and osteoporotic fractures, some of which are: a parental hip fracture, previous fracture(s), steroid use, lifestyle choices such as alcohol or smoking, and some pre-existing conditions, for example celiac disease. With these factors in mind, and more, Osteoporosis Canada has created a simple on-line quiz for you to determine your risk. Check out [Do You Know Your Risk?](#) With this short quiz you can find out whether you need to talk to your doctor about your bone health. Check your risk now, and share the link with someone who may be at risk, so a broken bone because of osteoporosis can be prevented!

## FUNNY BONE:

I hope life isn't a joke, because I don't get it.



# #CMC2018

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## National Conference on Osteoporosis and Osteoarthritis

May 3-5, 2018

 **OSTEOPOROSIS**  
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The 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Musculoskeletal Conference will take place during May 3-5<sup>th</sup>, 2018. This conference, presented by Osteoporosis Canada in partnership with Bone and Joint Canada, is a three day forum for clinicians, researchers and trainees with an interest in musculoskeletal health, with a particular focus on osteoporosis and osteoarthritis. For more information, please visit: <https://osteoporosis.ca/health-care-professionals/canadian-musculoskeletal-conference/>

A Bone Fit™ workshop will take place in conjunction with the conference on May 5-6<sup>th</sup>. If you or someone you know is an exercise, fitness or rehabilitation professional who works with clients with osteoporosis, please let them know of this valuable training opportunity. For more information, visit: [www.bonefit.ca](http://www.bonefit.ca)

# A Recipe from our Sponsor

## Cinnamon Multigrain & Yogurt Pancakes

Course: *Main Dishes*

Preparation Time: *20 mins*

Cooking Time: *20 mins-1 hr*

Yields: 12 pancakes (4 to 6 servings)

*1/2 milk product serving(s) per person*

**Calcium:** 25% DV/ 273 mg

Hearty grains add substance to pancakes without adding heaviness and will keep you satisfied through the morning. The milk and yogurt keeps them tender and surprisingly fluffy. The Cinnamon Yogurt topping is the perfect complement along with fresh fruit.



**For more information about this recipe:**

<https://www.dairygoodness.ca/getenough/recipes/cinnamon-multigrain-yogurt-pancakes>

### Ingredients

1 cup (250 mL) quick-cooking rolled oats  
1/2 cup (125 mL) multigrain hot cereal (uncooked)  
1 2/3 cups (400 mL) **milk**  
3/4 cup (175 mL) whole wheat flour  
2 tsp (10 mL) baking powder  
2 tsp (10 mL) ground cinnamon  
1/4 tsp (1 mL) baking soda  
1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt  
1 egg  
1/2 cup (125 mL) **plain yogurt**  
1 1/2 tbsp (22 mL) **butter**, melted, divided (approx.)  
1 tbsp (15 mL) maple syrup or liquid honey  
1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla extract

#### **Cinnamon Yogurt:**

1/8 tsp (0.5 mL) ground cinnamon  
1/2 cup (125 mL) **plain yogurt**  
1 tbsp (15 mL) maple syrup or honey  
1/4 tsp (1 mL) vanilla extract  
Fresh fruit

### Preparation

In a medium bowl, combine multigrain cereal, oats and milk; let soak for 15 minutes.

In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda and salt.

Whisk egg, yogurt, 1 tbsp (15 mL) of the melted butter, syrup and vanilla into cereal mixture. Pour over flour mixture and stir just until combined. Set aside for about 5 minutes while preparing yogurt.

For the Cinnamon Yogurt, combine cinnamon, yogurt, syrup and vanilla. Set aside.

Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Brush with a thin layer of remaining butter. Ladle about 1/4 cup (60 mL) batter per pancake into skillet. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes or until bottoms are golden and edges look dry; flip over and cook for 1 to 2 minutes longer or until golden and puffed. Repeat with remaining batter, brushing skillet and adjusting heat as necessary between batches.

Serve pancakes with Cinnamon Yogurt and fresh fruit.

## Tips

Choose a multigrain hot cereal that contains cracked grains about the size of flax seeds, such as Red River, for the best texture in these pancakes. If grains in your cereal are larger, soak in milk (without adding the oats) for about 30 minutes, then add the oats and soak as directed.

When cooking the pancakes, place the first batches on a wire rack and keep warm in a 200°C (100°C) oven while you cook the rest. This will keep them warm while preventing them from getting soggy from being on a plate or baking sheet.

### **This issue of COPING is sponsored by Dairy Farmers of Canada**

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