



Osteoporosis Canada

Ostéoporose Canada

**COPING**

November 20, 2014

## ***COPN: Proudly Celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*** **Navigating Winter**

### **In this issue**

- **Fracture Fact**
- **Navigating Winter**
- **Too Fit to Fracture**
- **Swedish Milk Study**
- **BC Government falls prevention announcement**
- **Funny Bone**
- **Bone Matters: archived presentation**
- **A Recipe from our sponsor**

### **Fracture Fact:**

**A man who suffers a heart attack from shovelling snow blames his heart, not the snow bank - but a patient who breaks his/her wrist from a simple fall blames the floor.**

*This article is an expansion of one published in the November 2005 issue of Coping. We wish to thank Gail Lemieux, one of the co-founders of COPN, who wrote the original article based on her personal experience of winter.*

The memory of the time I had slipped and fallen on some ice in front of my home, in the middle of a blizzard, still produces fear in my heart. Whenever I head out on an errand, I think about how people with osteoporosis need to be extra alert and aware of the dangers that can present themselves at this time of year.

When I fell that night just steps away from my front door, I fractured two vertebrae. These fractures in my back were so painful that I couldn't get up. I lay helpless on the cold ground as the wind-swept snow gradually covered me. Sometime later, I was found by neighbours who were out for a walk. They first thought I was a garbage can on the ground, covered with snow! This painful experience taught me not to take navigating winter lightly and I would like to share with you some of the things I have learned:

#### **Do I Really Need to Go Out?**

- Always be aware of the winter weather conditions. If the weather is, or threatens to turn, bad, ask yourself if it is really necessary to go out. I have learned that the pain, disability and impact on my life caused by a fracture are much more important than what I might accomplish by going out on days when the weather report tells me I should stay in. Whether walking or driving, some days it is just not smart to be out. On days like these, you can always do something else such as writing to COPN to share with us *your* experiences of winter!

#### **Outdoor Walking**

- When you go out be sure to wear proper walking boots. These need to be comfortable with low heels and non-slip soles with a good tread.
- There are a number of anti-slip devices, often called ice grips or ice grippers, that slip over your boots or shoes. These devices have spikes or coils on the soles to give you better footing on slippery streets, sidewalks and parking lots so that you don't slip and land on your wrist or hip, possibly breaking a bone. However, if you wear such devices, do remember two very important things:

- Don't be over confident that just because you have these devices on you won't slip and fall. You still need to avoid icy and slippery surfaces if possible and you still need to walk carefully.
- While they are safer to wear outdoors, the opposite can be true indoors. Therefore, be sure to remove them before you go into a store or mall because they are very slippery on indoor floors when they are wet.
- If you use a cane as a walking aid, there is another type of ice gripper you can get for your mobility device. This attaches to the foot of the cane to provide extra grip on a variety of surfaces. The ice grip attachment is secure and easy to install; it flips down to use and flips up again when not in use. These ice grippers come with one ice prong or five ice prongs and are extremely handy for helping you with your balance when there is snow or ice on the ground that cannot be avoided.
- Be alert for hidden ice. Is the road/sidewalk/driveway/parking lot cleared of snow, free from ice, sanded or salted and easy to walk on? Think about where you are going and whether the destination will have clear and safe access.
- Be very careful when getting on or off a bus or streetcar as the road and the steps may be slippery.

## Driving

Winter driving can be difficult for everyone, but if you have osteoporosis, even a small accident may cause a broken bone. Here are some winter driving tips:

- Whether you are a passenger or a driver, make sure to always wear a seat belt.
- Can you get into or out of the car easily, and has your destination been cleared of ice and snow?
- Make sure your vehicle is in good repair.
- Install winter tires.
- Change your wiper blades to winter ones; they do a better job of removing snow and ice to improve your visibility.
- If you drive a lot during the winter, take a course on winter driving skills and skid control.
- Watch out for black ice.
- Avoid sudden moves with your car.
- Accelerate and brake slowly.
- Maintain a safe following distance.
- Drive for the conditions: slow down and drive below the posted speed limit if conditions are bad.
- *Always* drive with your headlights on even in the daytime and all year round. This will make you more visible to other drivers and will improve your safety.
- If you are on your own and need to clear the snow from your car, do so very carefully and in small sections. Avoid awkward positions such as bending forward and twisting as these put undue stress on your back.
- Use your defroster to help clear your windshield while you warm up your car. A little extra patience can help you achieve the same result with less physical exertion and a lower risk for spine fractures (broken bones in your back).

If you are like most Canadians, you probably do not want to miss out on winter's glories entirely. Exercise in the out of doors can be a great way to strengthen your muscles and bones but if you have had a fracture or are at high risk of fracture, many winter activities, such as skating, downhill skiing or tobogganing, are probably not appropriate for you. Still, on a clear, sunny day when the sidewalks are dry and ice free, you can get some exercise by bundling up for a brisk walk with a friend. If you choose to walk alone, make sure that someone knows where you are going and how long you will be gone. If there is an activity that you have always

participated in and are skilled at, such as snowshoeing or cross country skiing, you may still be able to continue doing it depending on your fracture risk and your overall fitness. Check with your physician or a fitness professional to be sure.

Winter can be a wonderful time to be outside enjoying the wonderland it brings. Just prepare, be aware, stay cautious, and you, too, can have some fun while taking good care of your bones.

## Too Fit to Fracture

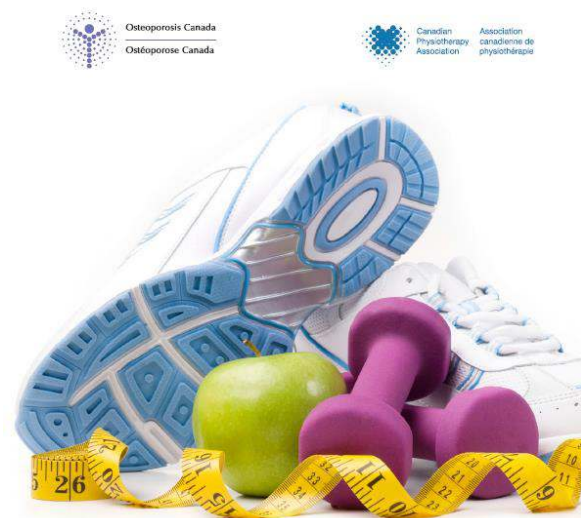
A new booklet, called **Too Fit to Fracture: Managing Osteoporosis through Exercise**, is now available from Osteoporosis Canada. The approach to exercise recommended in this booklet is based on new recommendations that Osteoporosis Canada released at the Canadian Physiotherapy Association's Congress, June 18-21, 2014. The recommendations focus on multicomponent exercise programs that combine muscle strengthening and balance training. An activity like brisk walking is great for overall health, but if you have osteoporosis, it's not enough.

Professor Lora Giangregorio from the University of Waterloo developed the recommendations with an international group of experts. They recommend that aerobic physical activity should be combined with balance and strength training. "Strength training exercises are key to maintaining strong bones and increasing muscle strength," says Professor Giangregorio. "There is clear evidence that performing challenging balance exercises can reduce falls, especially if performed most days of the week. We propose a shift away from aerobic-only exercise regimes to those that emphasize strength training and balance training in addition to aerobic training, to achieve the greatest health benefits (including fall prevention)." Falls remain the leading cause of hip

fractures among older adults, causing 63 to 83 per cent of hip and non-vertebral fractures and about 45 per cent of vertebral fractures.

**Too Fit to Fracture** includes information on strength training, balance exercises and aerobic activity; interactive tools for getting started; tips for addressing barriers to exercise; and ways to move safely during everyday activities to avoid the risk of falls or spine fractures. Poor posture, combined with loss of bone strength, can increase the risk of spine fracture. Poor alignment can be improved with exercises that target muscles important for posture. Individuals at high risk of fracture should consider consulting a physical therapist with expertise in osteoporosis in order to design and carry out an exercise program that reduces the risk of fracture.

To order your single copy, call toll-free 1-800-463-6842 (416-696-2663 in the GTA) and ask to speak with an information counsellor.



### Too Fit to Fracture:

Managing Osteoporosis through Exercise

Osteoporosis Canada  
www.osteoporosis.ca  
1-800-463-6842

## Swedish Milk Study

On Oct 28, 2014 a study on milk was published by Dr. Michaelsson of Uppsala University in Sweden. This study claims that high milk intake was associated with an increased rate of death.

In this study, over 61,000 women (ages 39-74) and over 45,000 men (ages 45-79) were followed for just over 11 years during which time they completed food questionnaires about their diet. After 20 years, it was observed that the death rate among the men and women appeared to be higher in those drinking three or more glasses of milk per day compared to those just drinking one glass per day. In addition, drinking more milk did not appear to reduce the risk of fractures (broken bones).

Although this study was published in The BMJ (originally called the British Medical Journal), its study design was not ideal for determining cause and effect between the high intake of milk and the increased risk of death. Other researchers have actually observed a lower rate of heart attacks in those with a diet rich in dietary sources of calcium. For example, in 2012 Li and colleagues evaluated a German cohort study of 23,980 people ages 35-64 who were followed over 11 years. This study found that a calcium enriched diet was associated with a lower rate of MI (heart attack) by 30%.

Clearly, further research is necessary before it can be concluded that a high intake of milk is harmful. In the meantime, Osteoporosis Canada still recommends that Canadians over age 50 consume 1200 mg of calcium daily through food and supplement, with food being the preferable source.

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## Osteoporosis Canada Applauds the BC Government for Supporting Falls and Fracture Prevention

Minister Terry Lake, the Minister of Health in BC, has announced a grant for programs to help prevent falls and hip fractures in older adults and enhance mobility through early intervention.

This announcement comes on the tails of an MLA lunch which was hosted by Osteoporosis Canada on October 27th, in Victoria, BC. The session focused on the osteoporosis care gap and the need for FLS programming in BC.

Click [here](#) to read the full press release

### FUNNY BONE:

If we are not meant to have midnight snacks, why is there a light in the fridge?

## ***Bone Matters: Take charge of your bone health***

Did you miss our recent live presentation with **Dr. Marla Shapiro on Thursday, November 13, 2014?**

A replay of the presentation is now available on the Osteoporosis Canada's website.

This means you can **enjoy watching it at your own leisure** and also **rewind to watch bits you want to hear again**, as Dr. Shapiro covered a lot of great information on osteoporosis, falls prevention and more.

[Watch The Presentation](#)

Interested in watching other archived presentations? [Click here](#)

### **A Recipe from our Sponsor**

#### **Cheesy meat loaf with apples**

Course: *Main Dishes*

Preparation Time: *15 mins*

Cooking Time: *50 mins-1 hr 50 mins*

Yields: *8 servings*

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

**Calcium:** 18% DV/201 mg

#### **Ingredients**

2 lb (900 g) ground chicken  
1 lb (450 g) lean ground veal  
3 cloves garlic, chopped  
1 cup (250 mL) Italian-style breadcrumbs  
1 1/2 cups (375 mL) apples, peeled and diced  
6 oz (180 g) **Canadian Brick cheese**, diced  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
1/2 cup (125 mL) unsweetened applesauce  
1/2 cup (125 mL) ketchup or barbecue sauce  
1/2 onion, finely sliced



#### **Preparation**

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).

In a large bowl, mix chicken with veal, garlic, breadcrumbs, apples and Brick cheese. Season generously with salt and pepper.

Mould the meat mixture into a loaf of approx. 5" x 12" (12.5 cm x 30 cm), place in a baking dish and cook in the oven for 30 minutes, or gently press into a 5" x 9" (12.5 cm x 23 cm) loaf pan and cook in the oven for 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, mix applesauce with ketchup or barbecue sauce and onion.

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Brush top of meat loaf with applesauce mixture and bake 20 minutes more.\*

\*Before serving, use a meat thermometer to check that the internal temperature has reached a minimum of 165°F (74°C).

**Tips:** Some of the best apple varieties to cook with are Gala and Cortland because of their good sweet-tart balance and ability to hold their shape as they cook.

**For more information about this recipe:**

<http://www.dairygoodness.ca/getenough/recipes/cheesy-meat-loaf-with->

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

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[getenough.ca](http://getenough.ca)