

Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!

What If You Couldn't Walk Your Dog?

In this issue

- What If You Couldn't Walk Your Dog?
- Fracture Fact
- Holiday Savings from Philips Lifeline
- Funny Bone
- A Recipe from our Sponsor

Upcoming Virtual Forum (in French)

Le diagnostic et le traitement de l'ostéoporose

November 20, 2012
1:30 pm -3:00 pm ET

Presenter:

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Betty Donaldson, an accountant with a large national firm, prepared for her retirement as carefully as she had prepared her many clients' tax returns. A widow for nearly three years, Betty created a detailed list of all the activities, clubs and trips she would have time to pursue after she retired, but what she looked forward to the most was the time she could spend with her beloved Golden Retriever, Maxie. Betty carefully covered all the bases to financially afford her all that she dreamed of, but, like so many Canadians, she had taken for granted the health of her bones.

On the verge of retirement, Betty fractured her wrist from a simple fall. Home from the hospital with a cast on her arm Betty was confident that in a few months the fracture would heal and everything would return to normal. She was lucky to have a good friend who was a member of COPN and familiar with Osteoporosis Canada's campaign *Make your FIRST break your LAST*. She encouraged Betty to learn more about her bones and her fracture by signing up for her own free membership to COPN. From Osteoporosis Canada's website, Betty armed herself with information and requested a bone density test and a fracture risk assessment from her family doctor. To both their dismay, Betty was found to be at high risk for another fracture.

Like so many who receive a similar diagnosis, Betty was shocked. What did this mean? Did she have to change her lifestyle, her retirement plans? Would she be able to continue to care for Maxie? Her doctor cautioned her that she might not be able to walk her dog, Maxie, who sometimes pulled and tugged hard on her leash, because osteoporosis can weaken the bones in your spine. In advanced stages, the every-day act of bending forward may result in a spinal fracture. For some people this means that the simple task of filling a pet's water and food bowl may be too risky. And as for walking one's dog, one may not have the strength to manage the animal anymore. A strong tug on a leash may be enough to break one's wrist, arm or vertebra.

At least one in three women and one in five men will suffer from a broken bone from osteoporosis during their lifetime. Like Betty, many are unaware that they have osteoporosis because there are no symptoms. Breaking a bone is often the first sign of osteoporosis. In fact, in those over fifty, 80% of all broken bones are caused by osteoporosis. Unfortunately, few understand this fact and therefore a huge care gap exists in Canada. Only 2 in 10 patients who have sustained a fracture are assessed for osteoporosis. Eight in 10 are treated for their fracture only and sent home without any treatment for their underlying osteoporosis, which caused the fracture

in the first place. The likelihood of sustaining a second fracture within the year is very high. If you have broken a bone after the age of 40, insist on an assessment. You may have attributed your break (fracture) to a fall, a slip or something else when in fact it was due to your porous bones. The only way to know for sure is by having a bone mineral density (BMD) test and a fracture risk assessment.

Fortunately, Betty was not found to have any spine fractures. Her doctor checked Betty's vitamin D levels and prescribed osteoporosis medication and vitamin D supplements. With help from COPN and advice from Osteoporosis Canada's volunteers, Betty also made sure she ate a well balanced diet that included fresh fruits and vegetables and adequate amounts of protein and calcium. In addition, her doctor referred her to a physiotherapist who created an individualized exercise prescription to strengthen Betty's muscles and bones; and an occupational therapist assessed Betty's home to ensure the risk of falls was as low as possible.

At the time of Betty's diagnosis it was suggested that she make some lifestyle changes, hire someone to walk her dog, buy dog bowls that were elevated to save her from bending over too far and begin taking medication. Betty took her diagnosis seriously. A year later, she was in the best shape of her life, and her osteoporosis medications were doing their job. Happily retired and fracture-free once more, Betty was able to achieve her goals and is walking Maxie again, just as she had planned.

What's more, Betty Donaldson is spreading the word. Bone health is critical to keeping the 'Golden Years' golden. So what can you do? Early diagnosis, including a fracture risk assessment and treatment if necessary, are critical. If you are fifty or older, at your next doctor's appointment, discuss your family's bone health history. If one of your parents suffered a hip fracture, or if you, yourself, had a fracture after the age of 40, ask for a Bone Mineral Density (BMD) test and a fracture risk assessment. Either way, make sure you have a well balanced diet, get regular exercise, and take adequate amounts of vitamin D and if necessary, calcium supplements. Be sure to also visit www.osteoporosis.ca for Osteoporosis Canada's lifestyle recommendations.

Your bones have to last you a lifetime. By being proactive and taking care of your bone health, regardless of your fracture risk, your body and your dog will thank you every day.

FRACTURE FACT: Loss of 2cm (3/4") as measured by one's healthcare provider or 6cm (2 1/2") or more in height overall may be an indicator of spinal fracture.

Help Osteoporosis Canada by helping yourself to holiday savings from Philips Lifeline

Osteoporosis Canada is pleased to announce a unique holiday season partnership with Philips Lifeline that saves you money while supporting OC's vision of a Canada without osteoporotic fractures.

Philips will donate \$25.00 to OC for each COPN member who gives the Lifeline medical alert service to a loved one as a gift before December 31, 2012. You can also give Lifeline as a gift to yourself. And as an added bonus, Philips is offering COPN members free installation, a saving of up to \$90.

Help support Osteoporosis Canada by giving someone you love Lifeline's award-winning, 24-hour help at the push of a button. Call **1-866-257-6195** and ask for **Offer #627**.

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FUNNY BONE: Is there another word for synonym?

A Recipe from Our Sponsor – Butterscotch Ginger Pudding

There's nothing more comforting than homemade pudding. This version takes classic butterscotch and gives it a twist with the tasty zest of ginger.

Course: *Desserts & Sweets*

Prep. Time: *5 - 10 mins*

Cooking Time: *10 mins*

Refrigeration Time: *2 hrs*

Yields: *4 servings*

1/2 milk product serving(s) per person



Preparation

2 cups (500 ml) **milk**, divided
1/3 cup (75 ml) packed brown sugar
2 tbsp (30 ml) cornstarch
2 eggs
1 1/2 tbsp (22 ml) finely chopped crystallized ginger
2 tsp (10 ml) butter
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract

Instructions

In a saucepan, heat 1-3/4 cups (425 mL) of the milk over medium heat, just until steaming. In a bowl, whisk together brown sugar and cornstarch; whisk in eggs and remaining milk until well blended. Gradually whisk hot milk into egg mixture in a thin, steady stream. Pour milk mixture into pan and stir in crystallized ginger; cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, for about 5 min or until bubbling and thick. Remove from heat and stir in butter and vanilla until blended. Pour into dessert dishes and let cool slightly. Serve warm or cover and refrigerate for about 2 hrs, until chilled, or for up to 1 day.

Tips

Unlike fresh gingerroot, crystallized ginger is perfect for puddings since it won't curdle the milk, while still providing a terrific ginger flavour. It can be found in the baking or bulk section of the supermarket with other candied fruit. If you prefer, you can leave the ginger out of the pudding for a plain butterscotch flavour, or just add it to the dessert dishes for those in the family who like it.

For more information about this recipe:

<http://www.dairygoodness.ca/getenough/recipes/butterscotch-ginger-pudding>

This issue of COPING is sponsored by Dairy Farmers of Canada



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