



ON THE TRACK TO BETTER HEALTH

A nutrition-based Newsletter from the Better Living for Texans Program

Get More Spring in Your Step with Stronger Bones!

Spring is a time when we transition from cold winters to longer, warmer days. Spring provides us the opportunity to get outdoors and enjoy such things as walking, biking, and gardening. For some, unfortunately, enjoying the traditional spring activities isn't possible because of poor bone health. That's one of the reasons we should do all we can to maintain good bone health as part of a healthy lifestyle.

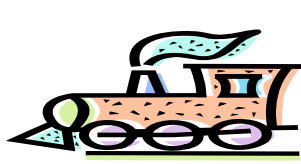
Most think of milk when the topic of building bone comes up, but for many milk isn't an option (either they don't like the taste and/or may suffer from lactose intolerance or other conditions). Fortunately, for the non-milk fan, there are many tasty alternatives to building strong bones.

An effective alternative to regular milk is flavored milk (chocolate, strawberry, vanilla) which has the same calcium benefits as regular milk and is often a favorite of kids (and adults). Citrus fruits are high in calcium as are fruit juices with added calcium. The *Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine* lists the following as calcium rich foods:

Food	Serving Size	Calcium per serving	Calcium absorbed per serving	Amount Needed to Absorb 100 mg
Sesame seeds, unhulled	1 oz.	280	58	1 ¾ oz.
Cheddar cheese	1 oz.	204	66	1 ½ oz.
Kale, frozen	1/2 cup	90	53	1 cup
Turnip greens, frozen	1/2 cup	99	51	1 cup
Instant oats	1 packet	158	48	2 packets
Lowfat yogurt plain	8 oz.	400	128	¾ cup
White beans, cooked	1 cup	161	35	2 ¾ cups
Broccoli, frozen	1/2 cup	47	29	1 2/3 cups

A diet including these and related food items (high in Vitamins C, D, and K, Potassium, and Magnesium) coupled with exercise and other healthy habits should have you well on your way to having healthy bones and an active life. So, get outdoors and enjoy the beauty of spring!

VEGGIE OF THE MONTH



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Beets (the roots) are low in calories and high in vitamin C and folate, a B vitamin that aides in the prevention of birth defects in children in the womb). A serving of beets provides 17% of the recommended daily allowance of folate (*Vegetables for Health, University of Maine Extension*).



Beets should be left unwashed when storing and should be washed gently before cooking. They should not be paired or trimmed and are best cooked whole with their peels intact. Once cooked, run cold water over the beets to cool them and use gloves when peeling the skin off to avoid staining your hands with beet juice. Beets can be found in stores throughout the spring and can be refrigerated for up to three weeks. The greens are also high in vitamins C and A.

Recipe: Beet Walnut Salad (*MayoClinic.com*)

Ingredients (serves 8)

- 1 small bunch beets, or enough canned beets (no salt added) to make 3 cups, drained
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup chopped apple
- 1/4 cup chopped celery
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon water
- 8 cups fresh salad greens
- Freshly ground pepper
- 3 tablespoons chopped walnuts
- 1/4 cup Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled

Directions: Steam raw beets in water in saucepan until tender. Slip off skins. Rinse to cool. Slice in 1/2-inch rounds. In a medium bowl, toss with red wine vinegar and add apples and celery. Toss together. In a large bowl, combine balsamic vinegar, olive oil and water. Add salad greens and toss. Put greens onto individual salad plates. Top with the sliced beets mixture. Sprinkle with pepper, walnuts and cheese. Serve immediately.

Nutritional Analysis: Calories 89; Cholesterol 5mg; Protein 3g; Sodium 115 mg; Carbohydrate 8g; Fiber 2.5g; Total fat 5g; Potassium 291 mg; Saturated fat 1.6 g; Calcium 53 mg; Monounsaturated fat 2g.