



Getting You On

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

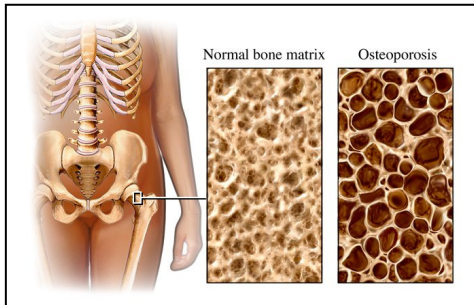
A Quarterly Newsletter from Peninsula Rehab & Sport Medicine

Issue 6 – January 2010

OSTEOPOROSIS It doesn't discriminate.

Most of us probably know someone in our family, or a friend, or neighbor that suffers from osteoporosis. This disease becomes more prevalent as we age. It does not discriminate. Our bones are continuously being broken down and rebuilt in a cycle that normally lasts two to three months. From the time we are youngsters until our 30's our bones absorb calcium and become stronger & denser. However, as we continue to age, our bodies begin the process of re-absorption of calcium from our bones. This loss of bone can be 0.3% - 0.5% more than is being rebuilt by our bodies. In some cases more or less bone is lost depending on our personal lifestyle, habits and medical history.

The loss of bone density can be slowed and/or prevented by getting enough of the appropriate vitamins, minerals (calcium, phosphorus, etc.), and exercise.



Researchers have shown that regular weight bearing activity such as walking, jogging, and aerobics, as well as other upper and lower body exercises, will help build strong bones and slow bone loss. Obviously the younger you start

exercising the better, but exercise will have a positive impact on strengthening your bones at any age. Although women are more susceptible to osteoporosis, it also affects men. According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, <http://www.nof.org/men/> 2,000,000 men are affected and 12,000,000 are at risk. So exercising and leading an active lifestyle is important to both men and women alike.

If you are unsure of whether you may have osteoporosis you should discuss this with your family doctor and consider having a bone density test performed. If you think you may fall into this category, you should not begin an exercise program until your doctor says it is appropriate. If your bones are brittle they might be susceptible to fractures if you exercise too rigorously or with too much weight or resistance. Have a professional such as a Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, or a Personal or Athletic Trainer assist you with the design of a program that will help to avoid injury and protect your bones and joints.

One simple low impact exercise is walking, progressing from a flat surface to a slope or stairs (use the railing for balance if needed). If you are just starting an exercise program you may need to take frequent rest breaks. You should avoid becoming too fatigued, and allow a day or two of rest between strength training sessions to assess the effects on your body. Progressing too rapidly may result in adverse affects. Maintain good posture while exercising -- stand tall. Improving your strength also helps improve your overall balance which will help decrease your risk of falls and fractures. The muscles of the spine, hips, and wrist are prime targets for strengthening since these are the top three groups of bones that tend to be affected the most by osteoporosis.

So beginning an exercise program no matter how old you are is a good idea. Talk to your doctor. Make sure you are physically ready to begin an exercise program and consult with a professional to help you develop a good program designed just for you.

Here are some guidelines and suggestions to help you through your exercise program, strengthen your body, and hopefully diminish the possibility of fractures caused by osteoporosis.

Warm Up: Do an activity such as brisk walking or riding a stationary bike for 5 – 15 minutes that gradually increases your heart rate and elevates your body temperature. This gets your muscles primed for weight training.



Exercising for Increased Flexibility. Flexibility exercises should be done on a daily basis. Hold stretches for a count of at least 10 – 15 seconds to allow your

muscles to elongate. Do the same flexibility exercises on both sides to assure that you are equally limber. Remember to **breathe** while you do all your exercises. Don't hold your breath even though it may be tempting when you are exerting yourself.

Exercising with weights Start off with light weights, 1 – 2 pounds is a good starting point. If this is too light you can progress a pound at a time. Your goal should be to do fewer repetitions rather than more. This means if you can do 20 reps with 2 pound weights, work up to 3 pounds and do only 10 or 15 repetitions. Why? Because fewer repetitions with a heavier weight will help your muscles/bones to become stronger than with lighter weights.

Remember: **breathe!** Breathing while you exert yourself decreases the internal pressure you create inside your body. Think of it like this; have you ever seen anyone exert so much power it looks like they could burst a vein?



What you are seeing is a great deal of internal pressure being created. This is not good for you, so be sure to exhale whenever you exert the most force. When you lift something exhale during the lift, inhale as you put the weight down.

Rest Periods: Rest is important especially for individuals who are not accustomed to exercising regularly. You should rest at least 48 hours between workouts to allow your muscles to get used to the physical stresses, and also to assess how you feel. The old saying, no pain, no gain is true. But the pain we refer to is sore muscles, not pain from a potential injury or strain. If it hurts, stop. Once you get into a routine you should allow your muscles to recover by taking 24 - 48 hours off between workouts. Every other day is ideal.

Variation: It's a good idea to vary your exercise program and do different exercises so that your body, your bones, and your mind get to experience something a little different from time to time. If you do the same routine all the time not only will your muscles, bones and you get bored, but you will not be stressing other parts of your body that potentially need strengthening as well, and that includes challenging your brain.

So talk to someone who can help you put together an exercise program. If you've been a patient in our clinic, we offer a fitness program that allows you to continue the exercises and use of the equipment you used during your therapy sessions. The cost is minimal. Contact our front desk if you are interested to check on availability.

Safety Considerations: Do's and Don'ts:

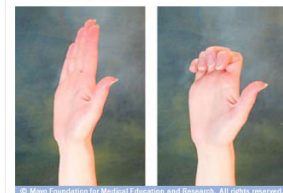
- **Don't exercise too rigorously.**
- **Don't use an excessive amount of weight.**
- **Don't race through exercises.**
- **Don't make this into a competition.**
- **Don't do twisting movements or excessive bending of the spine while performing stretches or exercises.**

- **Do always maintain good posture and appropriate body mechanics while performing stretches or exercises. Your therapist or trainer can help you develop good habits.**
- **Do breathe during exercise: Maintain a normal breathing pattern**
- **Do wait 24 – 48 hours between workouts.**
- **Do listen to your body - if it hurts, stop**

ARTHRITIS IN YOUR HANDS: EXERCISES AND TIPS TO RELIEVE AND AVOID PAIN

(Source: The Internet
Mayo Clinic WebSite)

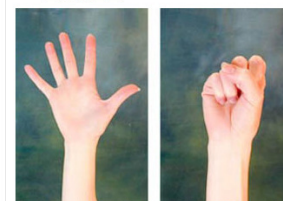
Hand exercises may help improve muscle strength and joint range of motion in people who have arthritis. You can do hand exercises daily or, preferably, several times a day. You might find it helps to do hand exercises while soaking your hands in warm



Bend your fingers

Hand exercises may help improve muscle strength and joint range of motion in people who have arthritis. You can do hand exercises daily or, preferably, several times a day. You might find it helps to do hand exercises while soaking your hands in warm water. Know your limitations, though. Hand exercises shouldn't cause pain.

Start your hand exercises by relaxing your hand. Start with your fingers straight and close together. Bend the end and middle joints of your fingers. Keep your wrist and knuckles straight. Moving slowly and smoothly, return your hand to the starting position. Repeat with your other hand. If you can, perform multiple repetitions of this exercise on each hand.

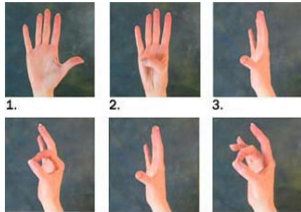


Make a fist

Start with your fingers straight and spread apart. Make a loose, gentle fist and wrap your thumb around the outside of your fingers. Be careful not to squeeze your fingers together too tightly. Moving slowly and smoothly, return to the starting position. Repeat. Perform this exercise with both hands.

water. Know your limitations, though. Hand exercises shouldn't cause pain. Follow this link for easier to read directions.

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/arthrititis/AR00030>

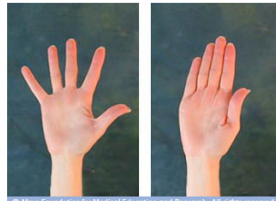


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Touch your fingertips

Straighten your fingers and thumb. Bend your thumb across your palm, touching the tip of your thumb to the pad of your hand just below your pinky finger. If you can't make your thumb touch, just stretch as far as you can. Return your thumb to its starting position, as shown in image 3.

For the next exercise, form the letter O by touching your thumb each fingertip, as shown in images 4 through 6. Moving slowly and smoothly, touch your index finger to your thumb, then straighten your fingers. Touch your middle finger to your thumb and straighten. Follow with your ring and pinky fingers. Repeat both exercises with your other hand.



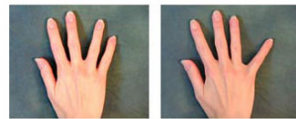
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Open your hand wide

Spread your fingers apart as wide as you can and hold that position. Slowly relax your fingers and bring them together. Return to the open-wide position. Repeat with each hand and gradually increase the number of repetitions.



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Walk your fingers

Rest your hand on a flat surface, such as a tabletop, with your palm facing down and your fingers spread slightly apart. Moving one finger at a time, slowly walk your fingers toward your thumb. Start by lifting and moving your index finger toward your thumb. Follow by lifting and moving your middle finger toward your thumb. Proceed with moving your ring finger and then your pinky finger toward your thumb. Don't move your wrist or thumb while doing this exercise. Repeat with your other hand.

In addition to these exercises, there are many things you can do to avoid aggravating the pain and swelling in your hands. Holding your toothbrush properly, using a special key holder, a jar opener, holding a book properly, and many other tips can make a big difference. Check out this link to find a lot of good tips and gadgets that will help you protect your joints.

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/joint-protection/AR00027>

New Year's Resolutions: Do They Really Work?

Yes! I mean No! I mean – it depends. It depends on your attitude. If you're serious about your resolution, you probably at least started trying to make it work. But for resolutions to be successful, you actually have to **do** something.

Some people will tell you to forget resolutions, they don't work. I agree. My New Year's Resolution every year is "NO resolutions!" This leaves me in the enviable position of never failing. Hmm, is that really true? Again, yes and no. I didn't fail because I didn't make any promises to myself. But I also didn't accomplish anything productive.

A New Year's Resolution is nothing more than a goal. Most goals that are unrealistic are usually unattainable. For example, if you are 65 years old and your New Year's Resolution is to look like a runway model or Arnold Schwarzenegger when he was 35, you are in for real disappointment. It's just not going to happen.

What *is* realistic is that you **can** drop 10 – 15 pounds this year and you **can** begin a moderate exercise program. You **can** work on a new image. Get a new haircut, update your wardrobe, get out of that dull existence! You **can** keep that garage clean on a regular basis. These are very realistic goals and have a high probability of success. All it takes is a stick-to-it mindset and the real desire to reach your goal. Most goals are reached by the will to succeed. If you have the will, you can make it happen. Easy, right?

Where does this willpower come from? Some people are lucky enough to have it inherently. They are born with the type of personality that drives them to do whatever it takes. The rest of us have to work at it. But it's not impossible. It's been proven that if you practice a habit you want to make, or break, you have to do it 28 times in a row. If you don't have



that inherent quality of "stick-to-it", then try the 28 times in a row method. Make yourself go outside and take that walk, every day, for 28 days, even if for a few minutes. Pick up those 2 to 5 pound dumbbells and do a light workout, every day for 28 days.

Get on that treadmill or go outside and walk for 10 minutes 28 days in a row. Check out the garage each morning for 28 days in a row to make sure you've put everything back where it belongs (don't forget to take care of it if you've neglected to clean something up). **Just do it!** - even if you only end up working for a few minutes. The key is persistence.

After 28 days in a row, you will find that on day 29, 30, 31 and onward, it will be much easier for you to get going. Just don't quit. Once you break the habit, you set yourself up for failure. If you miss a day because you don't feel good, or you have to be somewhere, get right back into the swing the following day. Don't cheat yourself out of the success that is so near.

Losing a little weight and being a little stronger will have big paybacks. You are less likely to hurt yourself when doing various chores, your balance will improve and you'll have a bounce in your step that others will notice! Chores will become less time consuming if you keep organized every day. This method can work for just about any habit you'd like to make, or break. All it takes is 28 days of persistence.

I'm not making any resolutions again this year. But I am going to try to set myself a realistic goal and turn it into a habit, starting right now!



These dogs have been staring at cake for 28 days. They haven't taken one bite of it and now they don't even want it anymore! They've just developed a **new** habit of staring at cake. ☺

(As with any exercise program, check with your doctor to be sure that it's safe for you to begin an exercise program. Your doctor can refer you to a physical therapist, or you can contact a personal trainer to design a workout program for your specific needs.)

The Newsletter is now available to everyone in a **PDF format**. We encourage you to receive this newsletter electronically. Send an e-mail to: maggiepenrehab@hotmail.com, and your e-mail address will be added to our list for electronic delivery.

We will not use your e-mail address for any purpose other than sending this Newsletter on a quarterly basis. We will not share your e-mail address with any one else.

Feel free to forward our Newsletter to your friends and family!

Save a tree.  Get your Newsletter electronically!

Links you might find useful and interesting:

Prevention and Treatment of Osteoporosis from WebMD
<http://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/tc/osteoporosis-prevention>

Prevention of Osteoporosis from the Mayo Clinic
<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/osteoporosis/DS00128/DSECTION=prevention>
Exercises for Hands with Arthritis

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/arthritis/AR00030>

Protect Your Joints
<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/joint-protection/AR00027>

Making new habits and breaking and old ones:
http://www.stephanieburns.com/articles/article06_habit.asp

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Next Issue: April 2010
Let us know if there are any subjects you'd like to see covered in our Newsletter. Our article on Exercises for Arthritis in the Hands was a reader request!

Peninsula Rehab & Sports Medicine is a state-of-the art Physical Therapy facility specializing in:

- * Orthopedics
- * Sports Medicine
- * Industrial Rehabilitation
- * Ergonomics
- * Manual Therapy
- * The needs of the active retirement community

with the goal of getting you on the road to recovery and back to the activities you enjoy.

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