

Exercise Can Build Bones

Menopause -- is the last period that a woman has and usually happens when she is in her late 40s or early 50s. Menopause includes other physiological changes over a period of time as the production of estrogen decreases. One common result is Osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis, by definition, is a condition in which the bones become thinner. Osteoporosis is a major contributor of bone fractures. Usually, there isn't any symptoms until it happens. Estimates show as many as 350,000 hip fractures (caused by Osteoporosis), occur in females each year. When a patient is admitted to the hospital with an Osteoporosis-caused bone fracture, physicians and therapists become involved with the patient's treatment. Rehabilitation usually consists of teaching patients proper body mechanics such as lifting and posture, and increasing bone density through moderate weight lifting exercises.

Osteoporotic women are encouraged to continue an active life. Walking is a safe way to increase bone density. Teaching one the correct way to live, sit and sleep are also important and help prevent future fractures. Adequate dietary calcium is a must; your family physicians can counsel you on this.

Here are some suggestions on avoiding fractures:

- Never bend from the waist only; bend from the hips and knees;
- Never lift a heavy ob-

- ject higher than your waist;
- Learn to keep the head in line with spin when standing, sitting, or lying in bed;
- Wear shoes with moderate heels that are all

about the same height.
The above was written by Erwin B. Elliston, M.D., Asheville, N.C. Family physician as a public service of the North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians.



What's this little fellow up to? That mischievous face looks like it's keeping a secret. But maybe not. Could be Justin Pratt is just having fun eating a snack while he and his mother, Sylvia Pratt, wait for a friend outside the A&P on West Trade St. (Photo by Audrey Lodato)

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