

# *You Can Do It! LLC*

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## Welcome to October!

The leaves are turning, the weather's changing ... how'd you like to make some changes in your life ... changes for the better?

This newsletter is dedicated to raising awareness of osteoporosis, a slow and silent disease that robs our bones of their strength and density. With awareness raised, we should all be able to begin making changes to help our bones!

Osteoporosis will be the focus of my newsletter for the next three months. In this month's feature article, we will look at statistics collected by Dr. Jenny Slawta, Health and Physical Education Professor at SOU. Next month we will learn more about the bones from Dr. Jill Steinsiek in Medford, and in December, we will look at diet as well as exercises.

Carol Lee

### Carol Lee ... Producer!

This summer I had the opportunity to be producer, director, and actor in the first of my series of DVDs focusing on osteoporosis. The first DVD is titled, "Building Better Bones Step by Step for Osteoporosis." It stars me and two other students from my Building Bones Step by Step classes.

In addition, I was able to get Dr. Jenny Slawta, Health and Physical Education Professor at SOU, to say a few words about osteoporosis at the beginning of the DVD. Her words are particularly powerful because of her hands-on research with osteoporosis and exercises.

When you purchase a DVD, you'll be able to get all the benefits of my regular Building Bones Step by Step class ... in the privacy of your home. Do 1 to 2 sets of the 15-minute exercise routine in the DVD (total of 30 minutes), three times a week, and you'll have stronger bones, greater strength, and better balance!

To purchase a DVD, contact Carol Lee at: [clar@youcandoitnow.net](mailto:clar@youcandoitnow.net) or 541-482-1887

**Coming Soon:** The next video coming from You Can Do It! LLC will be Building Bones Step by Step for Osteopenia.

### Updates and Happenings

#### October

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- Building Bones Step by Step, Series 1 continues through Oct 12.
- Series 2 starts up the following Wednesday, Oct. 17 and runs through Monday, November 19 – same time and place on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.
- Nordic Walking with Ashland Park and Rec continues through Oct. 16.
- A new Nordic Walking class starts up on Oct. 24 and runs through Nov. 14.
- Yoga and Osteo Stretch and Strengthening are ongoing.

**See our new Website for October schedule details:**

[http://www.youcandoitnow.net/class\\_schedule.shtml](http://www.youcandoitnow.net/class_schedule.shtml)

## Osteoporosis ... the Silent Killer: Part I

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A person doesn't suddenly wake up one morning with osteoporosis. Instead, an individual with osteoporosis has bones that have slowly lost thickness and density over a period of many years because those bones have not been maintained.

Osteoporosis often begins with **osteopenia**, a term that refers to a condition of low bone density. Osteopenia is not a disease; however, preventive measures should be taken since osteoporosis may develop if bone density loss increases. It is estimated that 34 million American women and 12 million American men have osteopenia, which if left untreated, can lead to osteoporosis!<sup>1</sup>

**Osteoporosis** is a disease that breaks down the tissue in our bones, making them porous and fragile. Left untreated, osteoporosis can progress silently until a bone breaks. It's estimated that osteoporosis affects 44 million Americans! However, early prevention and treatment can make a big difference.<sup>2</sup>

So let's look at the process of bone breakdown.

### Your Bones are Alive

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Bone is a living, growing tissue constantly being formed and broken down. Early in life, more bone tissue is formed than broken down, allowing the skeleton to grow. By about age 30 your bones are at your lifetime best, or your "peak bone mass." After this peak, bone maintains equilibrium (if it is maintained properly) until about age 50 in women and 60 in men. Then, bone breaks down faster than it forms. The resulting bone loss affects both men and women. If weight bearing exercises and proper nutrition are not regularly maintained, this bone loss can lead to osteoporosis.<sup>2</sup>

Because bone loss is a gradual process, just like bone growth, the stronger your bones are at age 30, the more delayed your bone loss will be as you age.

### Let's Look at Statistics

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So let's look at some statistics about bone loss provided by Dr. Jenny Slawta and the National Osteoporosis Foundation.

#### Osteoporosis and Fractures

- Osteoporotic fractures most commonly occur in the hip, spine, and wrist.
- The National Osteoporosis Foundation estimates that 50% of women over age 50 will experience an osteoporosis-related fracture.
- The National Osteoporosis Foundation estimates that 25% of men over age 75 will experience an osteoporosis-related fracture.
- 24% of those who experience a fracture will die within 1 year of their fracture.

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<sup>1</sup> "Osteoporosis and Osteopenia: Osteopenia," *FORE: Foundation for Osteoporosis Research and Education*, 29 September 2007, <[http://www.fore.org/patients/osteo\\_and\\_osteo-p2.html](http://www.fore.org/patients/osteo_and_osteo-p2.html)>

<sup>2</sup> "Osteoporosis and Osteopenia: Osteoporosis," *FORE: Foundation for Osteoporosis Research and Education*, 29 September 2007, <[http://www.fore.org/patients/osteo\\_and\\_osteo.html](http://www.fore.org/patients/osteo_and_osteo.html)>

## Osteoporosis and Menopause

- During menopause women typically lose about 2% of bone each year.
- Following menopause, women lose about 10% of bone each decade until age 75.
- After age 75, women lose about 3% of bone each decade.

## Fractures and Falling

- 90% of hip fractures occur from a fall.
- 50% of vertebral fractures occur from a fall.
- Many vertebral fractures often occur with simple activities such as vacuuming or lifting.

Hey, if these statistics aren't scary, I don't know what is! But wait, there is hope.

According to Dr. Slawta and the National Osteoporosis Foundation, it's absolutely essential that you increase your balance AND your bone strength to prevent a fall from occurring in the first place. And both the doctor and the foundation agree that weight bearing strength exercise is the best form of exercise for strengthening your bones and improving your balance. That way, there's less chance of a fall, and even if one does occur, there's less chance of a fracture.

Dr. Slawta also notes that a lifetime of walking may **reduce the risk** of osteoporosis, but short-term studies show that regular walking does **not improve bone mineral density or prevent osteoporosis**. To strengthen your bones, you must participate in some form of weight-bearing exercise that is of higher intensity than walking. Don't worry, we'll be talking about just the right kind of exercises in our future newsletters!

## Bone Density

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So, when it comes to bone density – what's the scoop?

Well, mineral bone density is measured with the DAREX test. This is a test you can take at most hospitals and imagery clinics. The results of the test will indicate whether you have normal bone density, osteopenia, or osteoporosis. To understand the results from a DAREX test, just look at the numbers below:

- Normal Bone Mineral Density                      0 to -1.0
- Osteopenia    -1.0 to -2.5
- Osteoporosis    -2.5 and above

As you can see, the greater the negative number, the greater the loss of bone density. Interestingly enough, osteopenia and osteoporosis are often discovered during a chest, lung or abdominal x-ray done for other reasons!

Luckily, if your bone density is low, you can increase it. However, Dr. Slawta explains that increasing your bone mineral density is slow compared to increasing your muscle strength or improving your cardiovascular system. It can take up to 6 to 18 months of weight-bearing strength training and/or jumping activity to increase bone mineral density.

However, it's absolutely doable with the correct nutrition and exercise program!

So, stay tuned for next month's newsletter when we'll find out the answers to these questions:

- What are the risk factors for osteoporosis?
- What about height, back pain and abdominals?

## **Your Mission**

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If you've read and understood this article, then you know that the population at greatest risk of osteopenia, and later osteoporosis, are females who are teenagers and early adults. With society's unhealthy obsession with thinness, these females are NOT developing the necessary bone mass. In essence, our media-obsessed, "never skinny enough" society is actually promoting osteopenia in females, who will likely all develop osteoporosis if they don't increase their bone mass/strength.

Girls need female role models who show them that having muscles and being strong is a good thing. You can help the girls and women in your family by encouraging them to keep their bones strong through healthy diet and exercise!