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How healthy are your bones?

Sunshine Coast and Gympie residents are urged to take action to build and maintain healthy bones during Healthy Bones Action Week (1 to 7 August),

Poor bone health affects two in three Australians, yet osteoporosis is one of the least-discussed, under diagnosed and under-treated diseases in the country.

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Dietitian Erin Coory says osteoporosis occurs when bones lose calcium and other minerals, making them fragile and more likely to fracture.

“There are easy, everyday things we all can do to help prevent osteoporosis. Things like regular exercise, including strength training and a healthy diet with adequate calcium are some of the best ways to develop bone health,” Ms Coory said.

Osteoporosis affects more than one in five women over the age of 65 years, compared with around one in twenty men. This number is expected to increase as our population grows older.

“Diet is important for bone health, in particular ensuring you are consuming enough calcium. It is recommended to eat three to five high calcium foods each day, which can be a glass of milk or tub of yoghurt.

“Calcium is also acquired from foods other than dairy, canned salmon or sardines both contain calcium. Including dark, leafy vegetables like broccoli, silverbeet and bok choy can also increase your calcium intake,” Ms Coory said.

These three simple steps can help build and maintain strong bones:

1. Increase daily serves of calcium rich food (it is recommended women over 50 years of age have four serves a day)
2. Go for a walk or commit to some form of regular, weight bearing exercise
3. Spend time outdoors to get more vitamin D from sun safe exposure.

It is never too late to start looking after your bones and take steps to reduce the risk of fracture in the future. For further information visit the [http://www.healthybones.com.au/](http://www.healthybones.com.au/).

ENDS

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