



### Healthy Bones



#### Did you know?

Less than half of Australian adults get their recommended intake of calcium.

#### Calcium

- Calcium is an essential nutrient for healthy bones.
- Calcium combines with minerals to form hard crystals, this gives bones their strength and structure.
- It is also essential for the healthy functioning of the heart, muscles, blood and nerves.
- If we don't eat enough calcium the body takes it from our bones resulting in higher risk of osteoporosis and fractures.
- In older adults, calcium absorption is less efficient and more is excreted by the kidneys, necessitating higher intake.
- Women also have higher requirements due to menopause being a time of rapid bone loss.
- Calcium food sources include milk, yoghurt, cheese, calcium-fortified plant based milks and cereals, tinned salmon with edible bones and dark leafy greens.
- Aim for 3-5 serves of calcium rich foods daily.



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#### Tips for getting enough calcium:

- Calcium in dairy is more concentrated and easily absorbed
- Consider eating the edible bones in canned fish eg. salmon and sardines
  - Add milk or skim milk powder to soups and casseroles
  - Use yoghurts in soups, salads and desserts
  - Check labels to confirm added calcium in plant-based alternatives.
  - Incorporate calcium-fortified products like breakfast cereals, certain breads, and fruit juices.
- Snack on yoghurt, cheese and crackers and almonds
- Soak up some sun- safely, to maintain sufficient vitamin D levels.
- Avoid excess consumption of caffeine and alcohol.

#### Vitamin D

- Helps our body to absorb calcium. It is essential for bone health
- Sunlight is the primary source of vitamin D.
- Food sources of Vitamin D include eggs, salmon, sardines, liver, and fortified foods like margarine.



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#### Tips for getting enough Vitamin D:

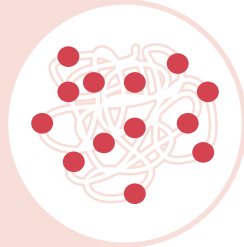
- Take a short walk in the sun or spend a few minutes sitting in sunlight each day.
- Eat eggs regularly, as breakfast or a snack.
- Have salmon or sardines at least one a week.
- Consult your doctor about supplements if vitamin D deficient.

## Protein

- Prevents muscle loss, helps maintain and build strength.
- It also reduces your risk of falls, supports bone health and is an important building block of our immune system.
- Food sources of protein include red meat, chicken, seafood, eggs, cheese, milk, yoghurt, tofu, legumes, nuts and seeds.

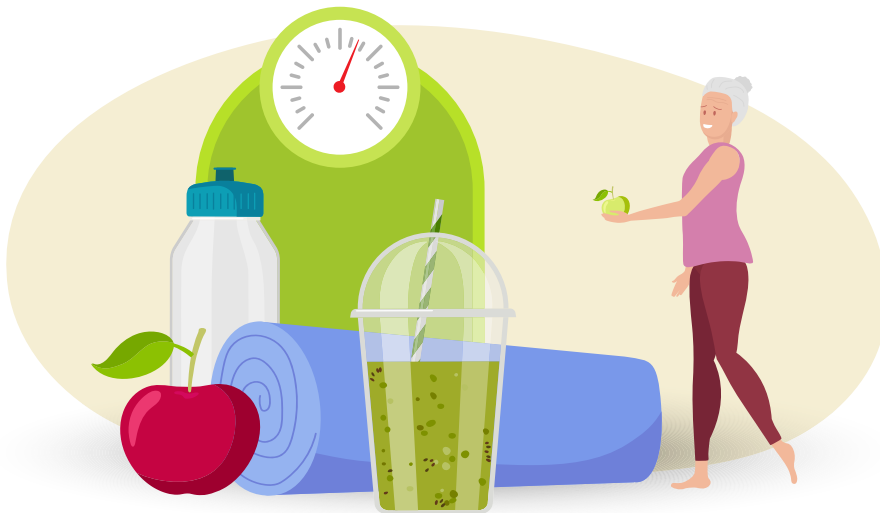
## Animal vs plant proteins?

- Chicken, eggs, seafood, and dairy products are considered 'complete' proteins as they provide all essential amino acids required by the body.
- Plant proteins such as nuts and beans are considered 'incomplete' proteins since they lack all essential amino acids. If you're a vegetarian or vegan, consult a dietitian to ensure your protein requirements are met.



## Tips for getting enough protein:

- Aim to fill  $\frac{1}{4}$  of your plate or a palm size space at each main meal with a protein food
- Pair legumes with whole grains to obtain all the essential amino acids, like having baked beans on toast.
- Snack on cheese, ham, yoghurt and nuts
- Consider yoghurts like Fit Cobani or YoPro, which have additional protein.
- Consume a protein and carbohydrate snack within 90 minutes post-exercise, like a milkshake, to support muscle growth and repair. eg. milkshake.



## What about Exercise?

Exercise is an essential part of supporting healthy bones and muscles. Aim for 30 minutes daily, including resistance based exercise.

Consult your fitness professional for more information.

