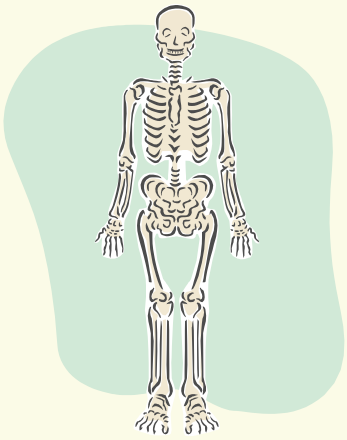
EAT SMART Newsletter Volume CLVXI December 1, 2009

What's Salt Intake Got to Do With Bone Density?



A new study indicates another benefit of eating less salt is a reduction in urinary calcium excretion. According to the British Journal of Medicine:

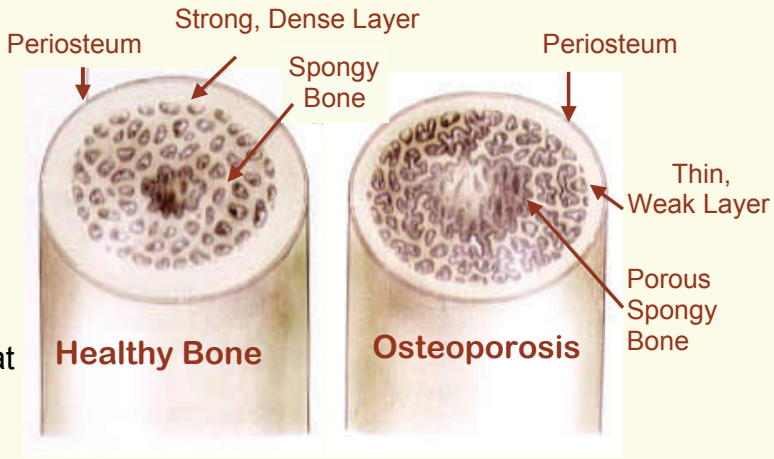
"The fall in urinary calcium excretion on the lower-sodium Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH)-type diet is likely to have a beneficial effect on bone in the long term," wrote Caryl Nowson from Deakin University, in Australia.

Numerous other clinical and epidemiological studies have indicated that a high sodium intake, even within the range of amounts contained in habitual diets, is associated with **high urinary calcium excretion in healthy young and adult subjects of both sexes.** These findings are consistent with studies performed among the senior age groups. These findings suggest that habitual excess dietary salt (NaCl) could be a factor resulting in bone loss through the promotion of bone resorption.

Salt is a vital nutrient and is necessary for healthy body function, but the average daily salt consumption in the western world, between 10-12 grams, vastly exceeds recommendations from the American Heart Association (AHA) of 2.5 grams/day to control blood pressure and related health risks in populations. Did you know that in the US, over 80% of the salt intake comes from processed food? People just don't realize how much they are consuming because they rarely use their salt shakers.

The American Heart Association has published the largest double-blind study proving that in just a few short weeks, lowering salt intake to a moderate 6.5 grams a day, reduced average blood pressure by about 5 points, both systolic and diastolic. But the Deakin University study indicating that salt reduction may also have benefits for bone health, is hopeful news for those at risk for osteoporosis. More long-term studies are needed to determine the extent and range of populations effected by reduced sodium consumption in relation to their bone health.

If substantial calcium loss is sustained over many decades, the result is an increased risk of urinary tract stones. Sodium increases calcium losses, with **an estimated five to ten mg of calcium lost with each gram of salt eaten.** Thus, it is likely that reducing your sodium intake can positively impact your bone mineral content.



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