



Samaritan
Health Plans

Managing osteopenia and osteoporosis



Your bone health matters

Bone loss is a natural part of aging. Throughout life, your body regularly breaks down old bone and replaces it with new bone. However, as you age, your body begins to lose bone faster than it can be replaced. This can lead to osteopenia or osteoporosis. Both are conditions in which the bones weaken, with osteoporosis being more severe and the chances of breaking a bone more likely. The good news is there are ways to slow bone loss and effectively manage osteopenia and osteoporosis.



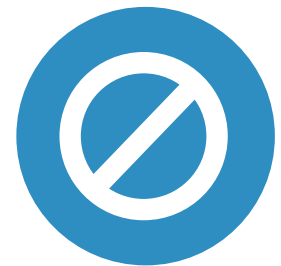
Stay active

Regular physical activity builds bone strength and improves balance.



Eat healthy

A healthy diet of vitamins, minerals and nutrients can help slow bone loss.



Quit smoking and limit alcohol

Smoking speeds bone loss and alcohol makes it hard for your body to absorb calcium.



Be active for healthy bones

Regular physical activity is important as it builds and maintains bone strength, improves balance, and reduces your risk of falls or fractures. Be sure to check with your health care provider before starting a new activity.

Eat healthy foods

A healthy diet with plenty of vitamins, minerals, and nutrients can help slow bone loss.

This includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fish, and dairy. The most important minerals for healthy bones are calcium and vitamin D. Calcium is used to build bone and the body needs vitamin D to absorb calcium. Aim to get at least 1,200 mg of calcium and 800–1,000 IU of vitamin D daily. If you are not getting enough calcium and vitamin D from your diet, your health care provider may suggest a supplement.

Foods high in calcium

- Dark green, leafy vegetables such as chard, collard greens, kale and spinach
- Orange juice with added calcium
- Low-fat dairy products
- Canned fish such as sardines and salmon

Foods with vitamin D

- Egg yolks
- Fatty fish such as salmon or trout
- Fortified milk and cereals
- Soy products

Another good source of vitamin D is 20 minutes of sunshine.

Quit smoking and avoid alcohol

Quitting smoking and limiting or avoiding alcohol are two of the best things you can do to protect your bones. Smoking speeds bone loss. Alcohol makes it hard for your body to absorb calcium and increases your chance of falling.

Ask about medications

Medication can be taken to prevent or slow bone loss. However, there are some medications that actually cause bone loss. Talk with your health care provider about medications that help keep bones strong and which medications you should avoid. If you would like a free medication review, call 800-832-4580 to speak with a Samaritan Health Plans pharmacy representative.