

RUCHI GURNANI · NUTRITIONIST

30 days to stronger bones

After 35, bone slowly thins every year. You cannot feel it, and you cannot undo it in a week. You can slow it down from today, with food, sun and a little lifting.

Swipe ➡

Read this first

Bones are living tissue. They are built up till about thirty, then slowly spent. Three things decide how fast: calcium on the plate, vitamin D from the sun, and muscles that pull on the bone.

Weeks 1 and 2 fix the plate and the sun. Weeks 3 and 4 add the lifting. Keep everything from the earlier weeks as you go.

CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR FIRST IF

You already have osteoporosis or a fracture, early menopause, long-term steroid tablets, a thyroid problem, kidney stones, or back or joint pain. Start the lifting only after they say yes.

1

WEEK 1 · CALCIUM AT EVERY MEAL

BREAKFAST A katori of dahi, or a glass of milk, or paneer bhurji, or ragi dosa or ragi chilla.

LUNCH Dahi or raita with the meal. One roti from ragi flour, or half ragi and half wheat.

4 PM Til chikki in a small piece, or roasted chana with a glass of chaas.

DINNER Paneer or dal with sabzi. A sprinkle of roasted til on the sabzi or salad.

THE CHECK

Look at each meal. If there is no dahi, milk, paneer, ragi or til on it, add one.

2

WEEK 1 · RAGI, TIL AND PALAK

- RAGI** No grain has more calcium. 100 g of ragi flour carries about 364 mg. Ragi roti, ragi dosa, ragi porridge with milk, ragi laddoo.
- TIL** Roast a jar of white or black til every Sunday. One spoon a day on sabzi, raita, poha or salad.
- PALAK** Eat it for iron and fibre, but do not count it as calcium. Its calcium stays bound and the body absorbs very little.
- PROTEIN** Bone is built on protein as well as calcium. Dal, paneer, dahi, eggs or sprouts at every meal.

3

WEEK 2 · THE SUN ROUTINE

- WHEN** Between 11 am and 2 pm. Early morning and evening sun make very little vitamin D.
- HOW LONG** About thirty minutes, three times a week.
- HOW** Arms and face open to the sun, no sunscreen for that half hour. A balcony, terrace or a walk to the shop counts.
- GLASS** Sun through a closed window does not count. The glass blocks the part that makes vitamin D.

OFFICE DAYS

Take the lunch walk outside, or use the weekend for two longer sessions.

4

WEEK 2 · WHAT QUIETLY TAKES FROM BONES

- COLA** Women who drank cola every day had weaker hip bones. Keep it for parties, not for lunch.
- SMOKING** Smoking thins bone. If you smoke, this is the single biggest bone change you can make.
- ALCOHOL** Keep it small and occasional.
- CRASH DIETS** Losing weight very fast, on very little food, takes calcium and protein away from bone. Lose it slowly.

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5

WEEK 3 · START LIFTING

WHY Bone gets stronger when muscles pull on it hard. In a trial, women who lifted twice a week had denser spine and hip bones than women who did gentle exercise.

SIT TO STAND Stand up from a chair without using your hands, sit back slowly. 10 times, 2 rounds.

WALL PUSH-UP Hands on the wall, lean in, push back. 10 times, 2 rounds.

STAIRS Climb two floors instead of the lift, every day.

HOW OFTEN

Twice a week, with at least a day between.
Stop if anything hurts sharply.

6

WEEK 4 · ADD A LITTLE WEIGHT

HOLD SOMETHING Do the sit to stand holding two full water bottles, or a bag of atta, close to your chest.

STEP UPS Step up onto a stair and down, one leg leading, then the other. 10 each side.

CARRY Carry the vegetable bags home instead of ordering. Heavy, but only as heavy as you can carry with a straight back.

NEXT MONTH A trainer can take you to proper weights safely. Ask for a strength plan, not a cardio plan.

THE RULE

Start light and add a little each week. Heavy enough that the last two repeats feel hard.

7

TESTS AND TABLETS

VITAMIN D Ask for a vitamin D test with your next blood test. Most Indians are low without knowing it.

BONE SCAN A bone density scan is usually for women after menopause or with risk factors. Ask your doctor if it is right for you.

CALCIUM TABLETS Food first. Take tablets only if your doctor advises them, in the dose they give. More is not better.

VITAMIN D DROPS Only in the dose your doctor prescribes. Large doses taken on your own can harm.

FOR LIFE

Calcium at every meal, sun three times a week, lifting twice a week, cola only at parties. Bones are a savings account. Keep depositing.

RUCHI GURNANI · NUTRITIONIST

Bones are one part. Your plan is the rest.



I write that plan for you. Your reports, your routine, your family's food. Three plans of ten days each, so it changes as you change.

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