



# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BONE HEALTH

## An Easter Medicine Path to Healthy Bones

By D. Graeme Shaw, M.D.

Maintaining strong, healthy bones is a crucial part of a healthy lifestyle. Most of us know that adequate calcium consumption and weight-bearing physical activity is helpful for building strong bones and may reduce the risk of osteoporosis (a reduction of bone mineral density) later in life. But, when someone has an injury to their bones or suffers from osteoporosis, they are often only aware of Western Medicine's drug options as a way to restore tired bones to their former health. As always, these drug-based remedies may offer help for some, but they unfortunately can lead to harmful side effects while not addressing the primary cause of the problem.

Eastern Medicine provides a more natural and healthful solution. Practitioners of Eastern Medicine focus on recommendations that improve your kidney energy.

Kidney energy is a concept created by Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) practitioners to describe an energy pathway that is believed to be the root energy within the body and linked to your body's growth, development, reproduction and strength of its bones. Kidney energy also influences longevity, memory, dental health, thyroid, cardiac and immune function and the retina and ears.

This article focuses on the effects of the kidney energy's function on bone health. In TCM, kidney energy controls the calcium metabolism in your bones as well as microcirculation (the circulation of blood in the small blood vessels around bones). Low kidney energy contributes to bone demineralization and acidosis caused by inadequate micro-circulation. This acidosis by itself can cause further demineralization.

Osteopenia is the term used to describe mild demineralization. Osteoporosis refers to more severe cases. Western Medicine offers many conventional treatments for demineralized bones, including pharmaceutical bisphosphonates (e.g. Boniva, Actonel, Fosamax), estrogen hormonal therapy and SERM (Selective Estrogen Receptor Modulators like Evista), and calcium/magnesium/Vitamin D.

Unfortunately, none of these therapies have a positive effect on the kidney energy and circulatory deficiencies. One expert has compared the osteoporotic bones as a sieve. Pouring more calcium into the system does not solve the problem. Also, one of the more serious side effects of bisphosphonates is an exacerbation of the inherent circulatory deficiency associated with osteoporosis, causing death of the bones (osteonecrosis).

So if bone health is associated with strong kidney energy, how do we keep our kidney energy healthy? There are three simple things that can make a difference for bone health.

1. Avoid diets that aggravate acidosis. Sugars, starches and excess protein all contribute to acidosis and bone demineralization. Balanced diets with an emphasis on alkalinizing foods, such as green vegetables, are most valuable.
2. Kidney energy (along with many of the other organs' energies) is enhanced by exercise. Weight-bearing exercises like walking, running and weight lifting are particularly helpful for strengthening the kidney energy and bones.
3. Kidney energy is depleted by stress and enhanced by stress-reduction.

Anything that enhances our happiness, relaxation and peace of mind benefits our bone health. (All the things your grandmother taught you are probably true: healthy diet, exercise and positive thoughts can strengthen bones and extend longevity.)

As for natural dietary supplements, there are many substances that can help to enhance our bones, including magnesium citrate, Vitamin D3, moderate doses of calcium, minerals, fish oil, antioxidants and Vitamin B12. There are also effective herbal kidney tonics that can enhance kidney energy to optimize calcium metabolism, circulation and bone health.

In my practice, I've had great success adding Get Well Natural's *Spine Well* supplement to my patient's diet. This product contains strong kidney tonifying ingredients, making it a perfect option for promoting healthy kidney energy. It's important to remember that as we age, kidney energy tends to decline, thus explaining some possible reasons why we suffer from more spinal, bone and joint pain as we get older. This is why I believe it is very important to practice an Eastern Medicine path to maintaining strong and healthy bones.

If you have any questions regarding the use of herbal dietary supplements to support your health, contact Get Well Natural at [contact@getwellnatural.com](mailto:contact@getwellnatural.com) or call 1-888-522-HERB (4372) or 408-260-9714, or visit the GWN website at [www.getwellnatural.com](http://www.getwellnatural.com) or the offices at 4010 Moorpark Avenue, Suite 119, San Jose, Calif. 95117.

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