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Simple tips to improve bone and joint health

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Have you ever woken up in the morning to unexplained pain in your back, neck or joints? Well, you're not alone. Bone and joint pain are one of the most common reasons that people seek medical advice. When your bones and joints are not performing to the best of their ability, it can affect everything from your performance at the workplace, to the

daily interactions with those you love.

October is Bone and Joint Health Awareness Month. This month is designed to remind us of the importance of taking care of our bone and joint health this month and in the months to come.

Knowing how to prevent, manage and take care of your bones and joints is an important part of your overall health and quality of life. Here are some tips for bone and joint health:

- Get active as often as you can. Physical activity helps to strengthen the muscles around your joints and, in turn, helps them work better overall.
- Maintain a healthy body weight. Excess weight can put stress on the joints in your legs and feet. If you believe you may be overweight, talk with your doctor about the possible effects on your bones and joints.

There are many things we do every single day that take a toll on our bones and joints without us even noticing. Bone and Joint Awareness Month is all about being mindful of our habits and changing them so that we can continue to live life to its fullest. Here are a few not-so-obvious ways to help your bone and joint health in your day-to-day:

- Straining your muscles can put stress on your joints. Try to avoid straining your muscles during activities that require awkward positions such as bending down, leaning, squatting, etc. Take breaks and stretch in between tasks to keep your joints healthy.
- Be mindful of your posture, even during sleep. Posture is the position where you hold your body while you stand, sit or lay down. The most comfortable positions are not always the safest and can sometimes lead to long-term bone and joint damage.

Check in with your doctor regularly about your health. Talking to a trusted medical professional can help you learn about any undiagnosed conditions you may have and help prevent them from worsening. You should reach out to your doctor under these circumstances:

- after an injury;
- if you feel weak;
- pain is joined by other symptoms like fever, tingling, numbness, etc.; and
- unexplained weight loss.

Bone and joint awareness is important for people of all ages. Implementing these strategies early can help set a foundation of healthy habits that will pay off in the long run.

Provided by University of Kentucky

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