

On Nutrition: The benefits of bones

December 2 2022, by Barbara Intermill



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My husband did an excellent job carving our Thanksgiving turkey. So well, in fact, that very little was left on the bones that I typically use for making turkey soup. After simmering them overnight, however, I was surprised that the almost bare bones still gave up a fair amount of meat.

Nutritionally, there's much more than meat extracted when you boil

leftover poultry, beef or even fish bones. Studies have found there's a lot of value in the broth.

When bones are simmered in water, they transfer important nutrients into the liquid. Of note are various building blocks of protein called [amino acids](#), plus calcium, potassium, phosphorous and magnesium. Not surprising; these are some of the major bone-building nutrients we humans need to maintain our skeletal structure.

Unfortunately, there are few actual human studies on the benefits of bone broth. But the results from [animal research](#) are intriguing enough for me to continue our family's turkey soup tradition. Here are a few findings:

Bone broth contains glutamine (an amino acid needed to make protein), which is especially important for the health of our digestive tract. At least one [animal study](#) has shown that glutamine may help reduce inflammation in conditions such as ulcerative colitis.

And have you noticed the [gelatin](#) that makes cooled bone broth look like soft jello? That comes from the breakdown of collagen, a protein that helps keep skin from sagging and is crucial for healing wounds. Gelatin derived from bones is also rich in [amino acids](#) that build and repair muscle tissue and strengthen our immune system.

Arginine, another amino acid in bone broth, is best known for its ability to produce [nitric oxide](#), a substance that helps keeps our arteries and [blood vessels](#) open for business. Arginine also helps with muscle growth and a strong immune system.

While researching this topic, we got a call that our neighbors' young daughter was kicked by one of their horses and suffered a fractured jaw. This active, growing youngster won't be able to chew anything solid for

at least six weeks.

I gave her mom some nutrition advice and provided a few samples of high-nutrition formulas this young lady can sip through a straw. And I'll run some strained turkey soup over to their house as well. It just might be what the doctor ordered.

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