

**Margie King**

## Fracture risk with osteoporosis drugs: Tips for natural bone health

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Cheryl Berkowitz is an expert on building healthy bones naturally  
*Photo: The Awakened Palate*

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The FDA warned this week about the [risk of atypical femur fractures from bisphosphonate osteoporosis drugs](#) but, in addition, claims have been made for years that bisphosphonates cause [osteonecrosis](#) or deadening of the jawbone, arrhythmias and even esophageal cancer.

Marketing of osteoporosis drugs has been aggressively pursued by the pharmaceutical companies leading many women to seek prescriptions from their doctors. Osteoporosis, however, is not a deficiency of Fosamax or any other bisphosphonate drug. In many cases, the condition can be vastly improved and even reversed by diet and lifestyle changes.

Cheryl Berkowitz is a certified holistic health counselor in Philadelphia and she works with women to strengthen their bones naturally. Through her business, [The Awakened Palate](#), she helps empower women to make appropriate food choices for their unique situations. A graduate of the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, Cheryl received her undergraduate degree from Trinity College and spent four years directing educational programs for the staff of the [Omega Institute](#), the oldest and largest holistic studies center in the U.S.

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Having conducted workshops in bone health, Cheryl was not surprised by the FDA's acknowledgment of the disproportionate number of femur fractures among women taking bisphosphonate medications for longer than five years, in light of how these medications actually work.

"In the two-stage process of bone remodeling," she explains, "old bone must be broken down and lost, essentially in order for new and stronger bone to be stimulated to grow and replace it. Because bisphosphonates stop the breakdown or loss of (older) bone, they leave our bones somewhat denser but weaker, and we are finally seeing the evidence that prolonged use of these medications may be the cause of spontaneous fractures."

According to Cheryl, bone loss is natural and normal after around the age of 30 and typically increases in the eight years around menopause. And there is no one single cause of osteoporosis. If bone loss is significant, she advises, it is important to look closely at the possible reasons to determine if there are endocrine imbalances or other systemic causes.

Whatever the cause, Cheryl says "nutrition plays an important role in restoring and preserving bone health. There are many things every woman can do to naturally build bone and prevent significant bone loss."

Here are four simple suggestions that Cheryl recommends to women for improved bone health:

1. Eat dark green leafy vegetables every day to mineralize and alkalize your body.
2. Eat sufficient protein to build the collagen matrix of bones.
3. Spend 20-30 minutes a day in the sun and/or take a vitamin D3 supplement so that calcium is absorbed well and deposited to the bones and teeth.
4. Do some type of weight bearing exercise that also stretches tendons and muscles for bone building.

**For more information, contact Cheryl Berkowitz at [www.TheAwakenedPalate.com](http://www.TheAwakenedPalate.com)**

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**By Margie King**

Margie King is a holistic health counselor attending the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. A Philadelphia native, she practiced business law for... [Read more](#)

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