

Bone Builders

Be good to your bones. They're yours forever. You have 206 bones in your body. That's a lot of bones to take care of!

Why Do You Need Bones?

Bones are important because they are the frame of your body, called your skeleton. Your muscles are attached to your skeleton and that's how you move. Your skeleton helps protect important organs such as your heart, lungs and kidneys. Without your bones, you would look like a jellyfish!

Strong bones are important to be a Healthy Athlete and do your best at Special Olympics events.

Why Do You Need Strong Bones?

You need strong bones to stand up straight, keep from getting hurt and prevent a disease called osteoporosis.

Your bones look like a sponge. Strong bones look like a dry sponge before you add water. They have tiny air pockets and are dense and hard to break or bend. When a person has osteoporosis, their bones look more like a sponge when it has soaked up water. You can see big air pockets in the bone. These bones are more likely to bend and break.



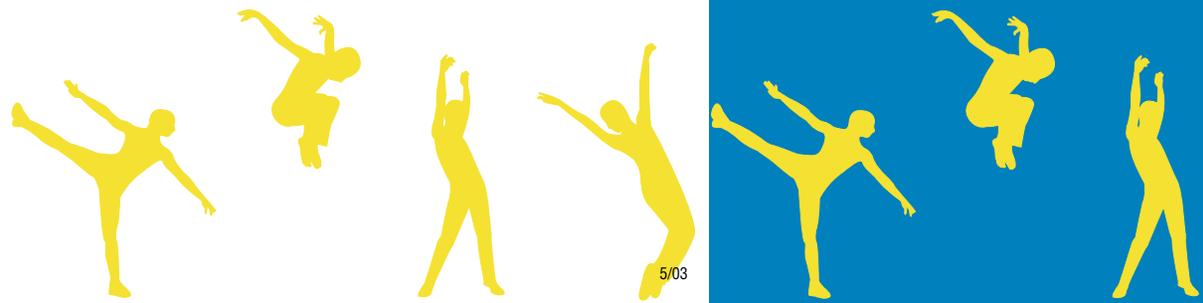
Special Olympics

Healthy Athletes
Health Promotion

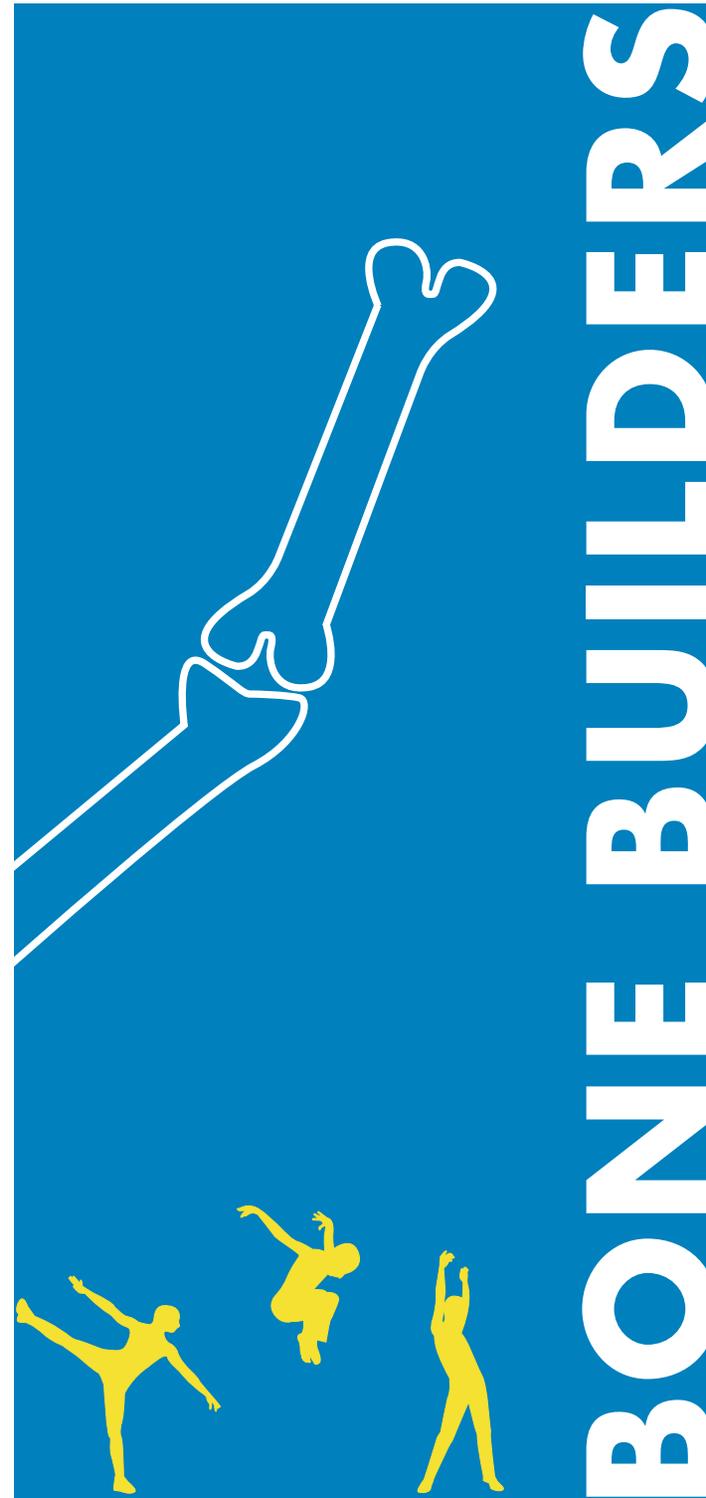
Special Olympics
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www.specialolympics.org

*Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation
for the Benefit of Persons with Mental Retardation.*



Healthy Athletes



How Do You Know if You Have Strong Bones?

It's hard to tell if you have strong bones or not with your eyes and you don't feel when your bones are getting weak. There are few warning signs to let you know that you may be developing weak bones or osteoporosis. But you can do something about it! Follow the four steps to building strong bones to keep your bones as strong as they can be!

Four Steps to Build Strong Bones

1. Get Bone-Building Exercise.

Exercise helps strengthen your bones. Some good bone-building Special Olympics sports are:

- Football (Soccer)
- Basketball
- Floor Hockey
- Volleyball
- Power Lifting
- Bowling
- Gymnastics

Some good Bone-Building exercises are:

- Jumping rope
- Elastic Band Exercises
- Walking
- Aerobics class
- Dance



2. Eat 4 or More Bone-Building Foods Every Day.

Milk Group

- 1 cup of low-fat milk
- 1 cup of low-fat yogurt
- 1 cup low-fat-pudding or custard
- 1 ounce of cheese

Vegetable Group

- 1 cup dark green vegetables
 - spinach
 - bok choy
 - collards
- 1 cup broccoli
- 1 cup cooked beans
 - pinto beans
 - navy beans
 - blackeyed peas

V-8 Juice with calcium added

Fruit Group

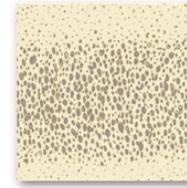
Fruit juices with calcium added

Meat Group

- 3 ounces of sardines
- 3 ounces of fish

Bread and Cereal Group

- 1 cup breakfast cereal with extra calcium and vitamin D.
 - Special K®
 - Wheaties™ Energy Crunch
 - Total® (all flavors)
 - Raisin Bran™ (all flavors)
 - NutriGrain® Bars



Left: Normal bone. Right: Osteoporotic bone, which is more porous, weaker and subject to fracture.

3. Don't Smoke.

Smoking cigarettes, cigars or pipes can make your bones weak. Talk to your coach or doctor about things you can do to stop smoking.

4. Take a Vitamin with Calcium and Vitamin D

Sometimes people need a little extra help to get enough calcium and vitamin D to build strong bones. Your doctor or a dietitian can help you decide if it is a good idea for you to take a vitamin with calcium and vitamin D. Your doctor or a dietitian will help you choose a vitamin that has the right amount of calcium, vitamin D and everything else you need.

