Making the right eating choices can have a positive impact on health in the near term, but also later in life. Bone strength and density is one of the key areas that can impact well-being, and can also be positively influenced by nutrition. This brochure will provide you with more information on how you can improve your bone health through delicious foods and exercise.
What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is often called a “silent disease” because you cannot feel your bones getting weaker.

Worldwide, one in three women and one in five men over the age of 50 will suffer a broken bone due to osteoporosis.¹ But osteoporosis is preventable. Bones, formed of living tissue, need the right nutrients to stay strong and healthy. A balanced diet, combined with regular exercise, will help to optimize your bone health at all ages and reduce the risk of osteoporosis. Read on to find out more about the simple lifestyle steps you can take to better your bones.
Maintain Healthy Bones

The keys to building and maintaining healthy bones include:

- Ensuring bone-healthy nutrition, with sufficient calcium, protein, vitamin D and important micronutrients
- Regular weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercises are beneficial at all ages and important for maintaining strong bones and muscles
- Exercise enhances the benefits of bone-healthy nutrition

Examples of exercises for strengthening muscle and bone

Moderate Impact Weight Bearing:
- Jogging
- Hiking
- Brisk Walking
- Stair Climbing

High Impact Weight Bearing:
- 50 Jumps or Rope Skipping
- Related Impact Loading Sports like Racquet Ball

Muscle Strengthening or Resistance Exercises:
- Weight Lifting
- Using Elastic Exercise Bands
- Using Weight Machines
- Lifting Your Own Body Weight
- Standing or Rising on Your Toes

As at all stages of life, exercise is essential for bone health in seniors too. At this age, muscle strengthening exercises, suitable to individual needs and abilities, will help improve coordination and balance. This in turn helps to maintain mobility and reduce the risk of falls and fractures.
You are what you eat.

Small changes to your diet can have a big impact on bone health. That is why making healthy eating choices is so compelling. Calcium, Vitamin D and Protein have long been touted as important bone health nutrients. Now emerging research has discovered several micronutrients that may be just as vital to bone health and are found in unexpected places. These incognito bone friendly nutrients are:

**Vitamin K—important for bone structure**
Found in leafy green vegetables, spinach, cabbage and kale, liver, some fermented cheeses, and dried fruit like prunes!

**Magnesium—needed for bone mineralization**
Found in green vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds, unrefined grains, fish and dried fruit like prunes!
Potassium, a mineral associated with a decreased risk of bone loss and osteoporosis, is also helpful in increasing bone mineral density while reducing bone breakdown. Plant-based compounds called polyphenols, found in foods like fruits and vegetables, may also help promote bone health by reducing bone mineral loss.\textsuperscript{4,5}

**Prunes are the Perfect Bite for Bone Health**

Prunes can help overcome the shortfall of needed nutrients. One serving (about 5 prunes) has 3 grams of fiber, 293 mg of potassium, and 16 mg of magnesium, all for less than 100 calories. “This is especially compelling as osteoporosis is a serious issue for men and women alike, and dried plums continue to show promising results in the prevention and reversal of bone loss. A dried fruit that you can incorporate into your diet as a convenient snack that may help to prevent further bone loss is an incredible finding,” says Shirin Hooshmand, PhD, Researcher and Assistant Professor, Department of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences at San Diego State University.\textsuperscript{6}
Delicious Ways to Enjoy Prunes

Enjoy these four delicious, bone-healthy recipes that will help power you through the afternoon slump or even be the star of a party. Registered Dietitian and prune admirer Dawn Jackson Blatner developed these recipes with simplicity and taste in mind. Research suggests that the nutrients in prunes support bone health – so snack on these balanced treats to keep feeling strong and satisfied.

Gingersnap Prune Cheesecake Bites
Makes 12

1 ¼ cups 2% plain Greek yogurt
1 egg
2 tablespoons coconut sugar
cooking spray
12 small gingersnap cookies
½ cup of Plum Amaz!ns
2 tablespoons candied ginger, minced

Pre-heat oven to 325 degrees F. Combine yogurt, egg and coconut sugar in medium bowl and stir, by hand, until smooth. Mist mini-muffin tin with cooking spray. Place a gingersnap cookie at the base of each mini-muffin mold. Note: If cookie is too large, use a fine cheese grater or knife and trim to fit. Fill each muffin tin to the very top with yogurt mixture. Bake for 35 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool for 10 minutes. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to set. Stir together Sunsweet prunes and ginger. Top each mini-cheesecake with prune mixture.

Nutrition Info (1 bite):
70 calories, 1.5g total fat, .5g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 45mg sodium, 14g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 9g sugar, 3g protein, vitamin A 2%, vitamin C 2%, calcium 2%, iron 2%
**Prune and Protein Plate**  
*Serves 1*  
This prune protein plate is a well-balanced snack that packs a protein punch.

3 Sunsweet prunes, halved  
3 brown rice crackers  
½ ounce brie cheese  
14 pistachios (with or without shell)

Place all the ingredients on a pretty plate to enjoy as stacked sandwiches or piece by piece.

**Nutrition (1 plate):**  
200 calories, 8g total fat, 3g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 15mg cholesterol, 110mg sodium, 26g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 10g sugar, 6g protein, 10% vitamin A, 4% calcium, 4% vitamin C, 6% iron

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**Balsamic Prune & Goat Cheese Bruschetta**  
*Makes 12*  

1 ½ cup balsamic vinegar  
1 cup thinly sliced red onion  
12 Sunsweet prunes, quartered  
12 slices (¼” each) sourdough baguette, toasted  
3 ounces soft goat cheese  
1 cup arugula (about 36 leaves)  
2 tablespoons chopped walnuts

Simmer vinegar and onion, about 8 minutes, until onion is tender. Add in Sunsweet prunes until warm, about 3 minutes. Top each toast with: ¼ ounce goat cheese, 3 arugula leaves, 1 tablespoon prune mixture and ½ teaspoon walnuts.

**Nutrition Info (1 bruschetta):**  
90 calories, 2.5g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 5mg cholesterol, 85mg sodium, 14g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 6g sugar, 3g protein, vitamin A 6%, vitamin C 4%, calcium 4%, iron 4%

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**Prune-Spice Hot Chocolate**  
*Makes three ¾ cup servings*  

2 cups favorite dairy or plant-based milk  
4 Sunsweet prunes  
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder  
½ cup Sunsweet Prune Juice  
1 tsp honey  
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
pinch cayenne  
pinch of sea salt

In blender add all ingredients and puree until smooth. Heat mixture until almost boiling in a pan on the stovetop or in mugs using the microwave.

**Nutrition Info (1 cup hot chocolate):**  
150 calories, 3.5g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 250mg sodium, 32g carbohydrate, 5g fiber, 20g sugar, 3g protein, vitamin A 15%, vitamin C 0%, calcium 20%, iron 6%
Organized by the International Osteoporosis Foundation, World Osteoporosis Day takes place every year on October 20th to emphasize the importance of bone health. This year’s theme focuses on nutrition, with the goal of educating people on the importance of healthy eating choices to optimize their bone health and reduce the preventable risk of osteoporosis.

Sources
2. 5 Steps to Better Bone Health (2015, July) http://www.worldosteoporosisdoday.org/prevention/5-steps