

Stress Fracture Nutrition: Prevention & Recovery

Abrupt increases in training duration, intensity and/or frequency of physical activity without adequate periods for rest and recovery can lead to micro cracks or stress fractures. This is because the rate of bone healing or recovery is unable to keep up with the rate of breakdown that is caused by the repetitive stress placed upon it. Proper recovery requires rest from intense training along with proper nutrition.

Although not all stress fractures are related to dietary practices, there is evidence that poor nutritional habits and dietary deficiencies can be contributors. Whether you are recovering from a stress fracture or want to prevent a fracture in the first place, consider the following dietary recommendations to support you, your bones and active lifestyle.

The Energy Balance Component

Stress fractures are more commonly found in those who consume low calorie diets. Low calorie intake can lead to multiple nutrient deficiencies and altered hormone status leading to an increased risk of poor bone health...stress fracture. A well balanced diet adequate in calories, protein, vitamins and minerals is critical for optimal health and exercise performance.

Power of Protein

Protein makes up half of bone by volume! When a fracture occurs, the body recruits proteins as building blocks to make a new structural bone protein matrix. This is why it is important that you meet your protein requirements. Aim for 10-20 grams of protein before and after your workouts. Some sources of high quality protein foods include lean meat, fish, low fat dairy products, and beans and lentils.

Calcium, Magnesium and Vitamin D

Calcium, magnesium and vitamin D are critical to bone formation and function. Chronic low calcium intake combined with inadequate energy intake is associated with decreased bone mass leading to an elevated risk for stress fractures. Recommended daily calcium intake ranges from 1000 mg to 1500 mg, depending on the individual. Just three servings of milk products each day may be enough to support bone health. Milk, yogurt, low fat cheese, sardines, almonds and fortified orange juice are great investments for your bones.

Magnesium is a major contributor to the structural development of bone, and it helps with muscle contraction. Current recommendations are 400 mg/day for men and 300 mg/day for women. Excellent food sources include pumpkin seeds, black eyed peas, bran cereals, and 1% fat milk.

Vitamin D plays a powerful role in helping your body absorb calcium. There are only a few food sources with vitamin D (fish, liver, egg yolk and fortified milk). Because it is not likely that you will meet your requirements for vitamin D through dietary sources alone, supplementation of 1000 to 2000 IU/day may be recommended. For best absorption, take your supplement with a meal or snack that contains fat.

The Chocolate Milk & Bone Health Connection...

If you ever needed more reasons to enjoy chocolate milk as part of your post-workout recovery regime, here it is! Chocolate milk is jammed packed with the nutrients required to support and heal your bones.

Make sure to bookmark rechargewithmilk.ca to get updates, event details and all the latest news from the original recovery drink.