



## April Support Group Leaders Curriculum

### ***Celebrate the Season with Bone-healthy Fruits and Vegetables***

With sunshine-filled days finally here, many of us are eating lighter-style meals. NOF has a lengthy list of “good-for-your-bones” foods packed with essential nutrients including calcium, vitamin C, vitamin K and magnesium. Learn more here: <https://www.nof.org/patients/treatment/nutrition/>. You will note that fruits and vegetables take center stage: perfect for light, warm-weather repasts.

As you plan your meals, keep these facts about fruits and vegetables in mind:

- This food group supplies one of the best sources of vitamin C, which stimulates the [production of bone-forming cells](#).
- When contemplating your calcium intake, don't just think dairy products. Many fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of calcium. You should also consider eating outside and getting some vitamin D, which promotes the absorption of calcium.
- In a recent study, the intake of fruits and vegetables seemed to have a [protective effect on bone metabolism](#).
- How do these nutrients help with bone health?
  - Calcium: Builds bones and keeps them healthy.
  - Vitamin C: Enhances the absorption of calcium. When vitamin C and calcium are taken together, they can maximize bone strength.
  - Vitamin K: Aids in the prevention of fractures in post-menopausal women.
  - Magnesium: Helps to increase bone density and the onset of osteoporosis.

### **COMING SOON! Nutrition Thought Leader, Heidi Skolnik, Talks About Bone Health and Diet**

NOF is finalizing content on educational podcast that focuses on how to incorporate foods that are rich in calcium, vitamin D and other nutrients critical for bone health into our daily meals. *Please note that rather than hold up the distribution of this Curriculum, as soon as the podcast ready-to-share, NOF will send to you via separate email.*

### ***Protecting Your Bones in Daily Life***

Good posture and healthy body dynamics protect your bones and allow you to stay active and independent. It starts with alignment.

- When you stand, align your head and shoulders over your hips, knees and ankles. This puts less stress on your spine and improves balance by centering your body weight over your legs.
- When you sit, align your head, shoulders, and spine. Keep a straight back and feet flat on the floor.
- How you stand and move determines how well your skeleton can distribute body weight and absorb the impacts of daily living.

NOF has an excellent resource, [Safe Movement](#), that walks through topics like bone-safe standing, bone-safe sitting, bone-safe walking, bone-safe getting into bed and similar topics along with safe exercises (see pages 10 -16).

## ***Protecting Your Fragile Spine During the Coronavirus Pandemic Webinar***

Earlier this month, Dr. A. Orlando Ortiz hosted a patient/caregiver-focused webinar entitled *Protecting Your Fragile Spine During the Coronavirus Pandemic*. This educational event shared what patients/caregivers need to know to prevent spine fractures, tips on how to manage safe movement and exercise at home and how/when to avoid crowded areas that may present a higher risk for contracting COVID-19. To watch the webinar and learn more, please click here <https://vimeo.com/525111508>.

## ***Growing Your Support Group: Insight for Leaders***

NOF would like to offer insight – as well as to learn from others – about best practices for helping to keep your Support Group engaged and to grow membership. When you have tips/information to offer, please send an email to [lisa.tumminello@nof.org](mailto:lisa.tumminello@nof.org). I will then share your recommendations with the extended group in future curriculums.

Below are some basics. Moving ahead, we will build on these recommendations.

- **Generate Awareness About Your Support Group:** One of the most important things you can do is let folks know you exist! You can do this in any number of ways. Here are some nuts and bolts to help you get started:
  - Invite existing members to share information about the group with their like-minded friends/contacts – those who may also have osteoporosis or are caring for someone who has the disease.
  - Introduce yourself to local healthcare professionals' management teams to let them know that you lead a NOF-affiliated Support Group and that if there are patients in need, to please forward the referral. Provide them with a "leave behind" that has your Support Group details (see next bullet) or send them a follow-up correspondence with specifics, which they can share via their communications channels (i.e., email, social media, newsletters, etc.).
  - Create and post flyers at local organizations such as physical therapy clinics, Pilates and yoga studios, etc. Please be certain to check with management before posting flyers, which should include name, date (i.e., first Monday of the month), meeting time and contact details for more information. During the COVID-19 pandemic, ensure that it is clear that meetings are virtual. And, of course, you should offer any/all of this information via your social media channels.

**Stay Tuned for National Osteoporosis Month 2021 Details Coming Soon!**