



June/July Support Group Leaders Curriculum

With life gradually returning to some degree of normal, doctors' offices that were closed or offering limited services due to the pandemic are opening back up again. It is time to take out your calendar and ensure that critical healthcare appointments – like osteoporosis treatment plans and DXA testing -- take priority. NOF has a library of user-friendly, practical resources that will help patients get back on track and focus on their bone health.

Bone Healthcare Basics

- **How to Find a Doctor**

While there is no physician specialty solely dedicated to osteoporosis, many doctors in various areas of medical specialty have gained the expertise to diagnose and treat people with osteoporosis. These areas of specialization can include endocrinology, family practice, geriatrics, gynecology, internal medicine, orthopedics, physical medicine and rehabilitation and rheumatology. This resource is packed with information that will jumpstart your search. Check out <http://www.nof.org/wp-content/uploads/How-to-Find-a-Doctor.pdf> to learn more.

- **Prepare for Your Visit**

The better prepared you are for your visit, the more you will get out of your appointment. Check out the link below for tried and true communication tips for bringing your appointment to the next level. <https://www.nof.org/patients/communication-with-your-doctor/>

- **Doctor Checklist**

In addition to prepping for your appointment, it's a good idea to bring a list of questions with you. Print this [handy checklist](#) before you head to your checkup. Write down the answers to the questions right on the form and keep it with your medical information.

- **Telemedicine Appointment Information**

Telemedicine – connecting with a healthcare provider virtually – has remained a viable option for many Americans. Learn how to get the most out of your remote visit by reviewing this excellent Q and A authored by E. Michael Lewiecki, MD, Vice President, Board of Trustees, National Osteoporosis Foundation. Get the most out of your virtual healthcare visit by reviewing this link <http://www.nof.org/wp-content/uploads/QA-Dr.-Lewiecki-Telemed-Appts.pdf>.

- **Organizations that Can Help Financially**

NOF works closely with both of the organizations showcased below. If you are on costly medication and need financial assistance, please check out their websites for resources and cost-saving tips.

NeedyMeds

NeedyMeds has free information on medication and healthcare costs savings programs including prescription assistance programs and medical and dental. There is a wealth of information shared at <https://www.needy meds.org/>.

PAN Foundation

The Patient Access Network is dedicated to helping federally and commercially insured people living with life-threatening, chronic and rare disease with the out-of-pocket costs for their prescribed medications. Visit www.panfoundation.org to learn more.

Shareable Content from National Osteoporosis Month

Webinar: Physical Therapy to Help Treat Osteoporosis

The National Osteoporosis Foundation and NY Physical Therapy & Wellness teamed up for an engaging and educational webinar, *Helping to Prevent and Manage Osteoporosis with Physical Therapy*. Dr. Garry Kushnir, PT, DPT of NY Physical Therapy & Wellness shared how physical therapy can help improve bone density and the role that strengthening your core, lower extremities and trunk can play in helping to prevent and treat osteoporosis. [Click here to view the webinar.](#)

Voices of Osteoporosis Podcast

Whether you or a loved one has been diagnosed with osteoporosis, it can often be an emotional journey. Where do you turn for help? The National Osteoporosis Foundation's online support community, hosted by Inspire, is more than 67,000 members strong. In this episode of *Bone Talk*, we are joined by two of our community volunteer moderators, Pam Flores and Sarah Purcell. Pam and Sarah share some of their own osteoporosis experiences and how the NOF online peer-to-peer community can help you find answers and support. [Click here to listen to this inspiring podcast.](#)

Growing Your Support Group Part II

- **Encourage Group Members to Get Involved:** With the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions easing and a lighter, brighter feeling about the future, Americans are experiencing renewed optimism. This could make the timing right to inspire members – both new and existing – to get involved.
 - One of the key basics to growing your group is member retention. This begins with the first meeting. When a newcomer joins, do everything you can to make them feel comfortable. Team them up with a “buddy” who can help with the welcome by introducing other members, sharing insight about the group, highlighting relevant information about previous meetings and outlining how they can get involved going forward.
 - To stay relevant to the group's needs, learn what is most real and relevant to members. This is easily accomplished by sharing a survey, which asks about their experiences. The survey could take any number of forms; for example, it could consist of multiple-choice questions, rankings of certain meeting topics and/or open-ended questions.
 - Learn about and leverage the most appropriate social media platforms to both keep members engaged and to share with others – by doing so, this may very well help your group to grow.
 - Involve all members to help generate recruitment ideas. Once the details are fleshed out, identify a team to proactively contact like-minded organizations (i.e., physical therapy centers, health clubs, senior living facilities, community centers, etc.) to get the word out and share resources about your group.