

Using Diet to Preserve Health and Wellness in the Aging Population



Bess Dawson-Hughes
Professor of Medicine, Endocrine Division

CURRENT RESEARCH

Alkali (from fruits and vegetables or bicarbonate pills) and vitamin D can improve muscle and bone strength

Loss of muscle mass leads to falls and loss of bone mass makes it more likely that a fall will result in fracture. According to the World Health Organization, approximately 28-35% of people aged 65 and over fall each year. This rate increases to 32-42% for those over 70 years of age. The increase in falls within the senior population is related to the aging process itself - doctors know that after 50 years old, we lose bone and muscle mass. Given this knowledge, researchers are now trying to focus on optimal nutrition in order to slow or prevent the loss of muscle and bone mass and thus, enable quality of life to be restored for the aging population.


Dr. Bess Dawson-Hughes, of Tufts University, has dedicated her medical career to preserving senior patients' health and independence by investigating ways to reduce the bone and muscle wasting that occur with aging. Specifically, her research focuses on how nutrition can improve muscle and bone strength in older men and women. Using small, highly controlled human metabolic studies, large randomized controlled trials, and observational studies to determine how nutrients influence bone and muscle, Dr. Dawson-Hughes is working towards improving the quality of life as we age.

Dr. Dawson-Hughes' current focus includes:

- Alkali: Americans generally eat diets that add acid to the body because the ingestion of protein and cereal grains which add acid are disproportionate to their intake of fruits and vegetables which provide alkali. Dr. Dawson-Hughes' research indicates that bone and muscle performance can be improved with the addition of alkali in the form of fruits and vegetables or bicarbonate pills. Her recent results indicate...

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AFFILIATION

 Tufts University

EDUCATION

- M.D. in School of Medicine 1975, Tufts University

AWARDS

- Editorial Board of Tufts Health and Nutrition Letter
- Editorial Board of Bone
- Editorial Board of Osteoporosis International
- Editorial Board of Calcified Tissue International
- NOF Lawrence G. Raisz Memorial Lecture Award, 2014
- and 1 more...

RESEARCH AREAS

Health & Wellness, Longevity, Immortality Research

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will support the continued research of Dr. Dawson-Hughes as she investigates the nutritional aspects of bone and muscle health and continues to move towards treatments and preventative methods to decrease the loss of bone and muscle mass. Her research therefore will impact each of us as we age. Donations will fund the salaries of personnel and the costs of clinical trials.

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