

## Happy Bones Make Happy Holidays



### By Dr. Jean-Jacques Dugoua, ND

From getting the house covered in lights and wreaths to doing some “winter cleaning” before the guests arrive the holidays are a time of decoration. Although injuries due to falling are common throughout the year, they may also happen over the holidays.

#### Holidays Falls

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), an estimated 17,465 persons were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments for holiday-decorating-related falls from 2002-2003.

- Approximately 62% of those injured were aged 20-49 years
- Approximately 43% of injuries were caused by falls from ladders
- Men were 40% more likely than females to be injured

The CDC concluded that a number of these falls could have been avoided through safety prevention strategies. Sure we all fall, but what happens if the person falling has weak bones?

#### The bare bones of osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a thinning of bone and decrease in bone density. More common in women than men, osteoporosis is one of the most common diseases following menopause. The concern with osteoporosis lies in that with fragile bone, normal movements or falls can lead to fractures. Fractured bones in osteoporotic patients often require surgery, short- to long-term convalescence, and in some cases, they may lead to life-threatening complications.

#### Osteoporosis prevention

At the top of the list, there is calcium. You’ve also heard about the importance of supplementing with vitamin D, but what about other vitamins and minerals that help strengthen your bones?

- Boron: An increase in dietary intake of boron was reported to increase plasma estrogen (estradiol) and testosterone and decrease urinary calcium excretion in postmenopausal women.
- Vitamin K: Studies have shown that the combined administration of vitamin D (D3) and vitamin K (K2), compared with just calcium administration, appears to increase the bone mineral density of the lumbar spine in postmenopausal women with osteoporosis. Another study of 241 osteoporotic patients over 24-months showed that vitamin K treatment effectively prevented the occurrence of new fractures.

#### Holistic approach

In addition to vitamin and mineral supplementation, it is important to maintain a regular exercise regime involving weight bearing exercises, as well as maintaining a pH-balanced diet to ensure healthy bones.