

Providing

reliable and up to date information to improve the understanding of arthritis and osteoporosis

Promoting

healthy lifestyles and self-management to optimise health outcomes

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joinNTed

Arthritis & Osteoporosis NT

August—September 2025

Info sessions - free for members!

Self-management of chronic pain

♦ Friday 15th August 9:30 am to 1:00 pm

“What a Pain!” workshops provide participants with the opportunity to listen and learn, talk and share. Participants receive booklets and other relevant materials to take home.

Understanding and managing arthritis and osteoporosis - NEW session

♦ Friday 19th September 10:00 am to 11:30 am

An opportunity to update your knowledge and maybe share some of your own useful tips with others.



“Taking the first step: help to get yourself moving”

♦ Friday 17th October 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

A two hour info session to encourage those with arthritis and/or other chronic conditions to make physical activity a part of every day life, and learn about the many local options.



For all sessions bookings are essential

Please call the office on 8948 5232 (Monday to Thursday 9:30am to 2:00pm) for all enquiries and bookings.

All these sessions are open to the general public and a donation of \$5 per session towards materials is appreciated. Please pass the word around.

Thank you to the staff at the Electorate Office of Oly Carlson, Member for Wanguri, for assistance with printing and collating this edition of our newsletter.

How to boost bone health and reduce risk of osteoporosis and fractures

Adapted from:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/health/2025-06-15/bone-health-osteoporosis-osteopenia-exercise-vitamin-d/105228806>

Imagine not being able to cough, sneeze or be hugged for fear of your bones breaking. This can happen to people with severely weak bones. A small trip and fall can be catastrophic, with a broken hip leading to a rapid deterioration in health.

Today, millions of Australians live with poor bone health, and the "silent disease" of osteoporosis is expected to lead to [one fracture every 30 seconds by 2033](#).

Who is at risk of fragile bones and osteoporosis?

One in two women will suffer an osteoporosis-related fracture over their lifetime and one in three men. Younger people can also develop weak bones.

In the skeleton bone is constantly being removed and replaced by new bone. New bone growth is stimulated or its loss prevented with the right combination of diet and exercise and, where needed, medications.

During adolescence, bones grow rapidly, and reach peak bone mass around 20 to 30 years of age. Adults eventually start losing bone faster than it's replaced, and this can increase fracture risk. Unfortunately, the current sedentary lifestyle of many children could leave them with a low bone bank balance as they enter adulthood, and may create problems later in life.

Bone and muscle strength in women peaks at 30 before declining, especially around menopause when there is a massive drop of oestrogen, a hormone important for bone health.

Other risk factors include:

- family history of osteoporosis
- low calcium or vitamin D intake
- certain conditions or medications that affect your estrogen or testosterone levels
- **smoking, excessive alcohol and a sedentary life-style.**

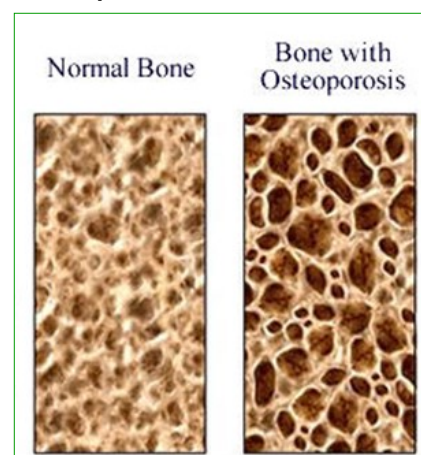
What type of exercise can strengthen bones?

Bone cells are only triggered to grow or repair when they experience a certain amount of stress and strain, so gentle walking, cycling or swimming do little to increase bone strength. *Though still good for overall physical and mental health - note by AONT*

Impact and resistance exercises are essential for strong bones:

Impact weight-bearing exercise - think of forceful jumping, running or hopping.

Resistance exercise to strengthen muscles - weights or resistance bands, push ups, sit ups or squats.



Because our bones adapt to exercise, experts advise you to “push yourself” doing impact and resistance exercise, continually increasing the level of intensity.

"Exercise snacking" - **brief bouts of high-intensity exercise** - can be done in short breaks e.g. waiting for the kettle to boil. High-intensity exercising may require supervision, especially if you are older, so **talk to a qualified health practitioner before embarking on a routine**.

Ask your GP to see if you qualify for a scan of your bone mineral density, which is the most common measure of bone strength, and subsidised visits to see a professional such as a physiotherapist or an exercise physiologist, who can tailor an exercise prescription that is suited to your individual needs.

Exercise can also improve strength and balance, which can help prevent falls.

Am I safe from fractures if I don't have osteoporosis?

The size, shape and structure of bones, referred to as bone "micro-architecture", can also affect how strong they are.

Most fractures occur in people with osteopenia, where bone density is low, but not low enough to qualify for an osteoporosis diagnosis.

Most fractures due to fragile bones are caused by falls. Activities that increase your strength, stability, mobility and balance will keep you on your feet and less prone to falls.

How does vitamin D help bone health?

Strong bones need the right balance of nutrients including vitamin D and calcium. Vitamin D helps us absorb calcium, which is needed to build bone. While some foods such as fatty fish and milk can provide vitamin D, the main source of this nutrient is exposure to sunlight.

One in four Australians are deficient because they don't get enough sunlight exposure. But be careful not to take too much Vitamin D supplement. Some people take many times the recommended amount, risking the development of kidney stones.

What about calcium and protein?

According to the [RACGP guidelines for maintaining bone health and preventing fractures](#):

- Adults need **1000 milligrams of calcium per day** with women over 50 and men over 70 needing 1300mg a day.
- If you need to take **vitamin D supplements, 800 - 1000 IU per day** is usually sufficient, but some people may need higher doses.
- An intake of **1.0 - 1.2 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight per day** is recommended for older adults.

Dairy foods are good sources of both calcium and protein. Other sources of calcium include firm tofu, almonds, sesame seeds, tinned fish, some green leafy vegetables, dried figs, and calcium-fortified non-dairy milks.



Community engagement

Healthy Bones Reception at Government House

As joint Patrons of Arthritis and Osteoporosis NT, His Honour and Ms Jones recently hosted a Healthy Bones reception at Government House. The evening brought together local leaders in bone health and fitness for a powerful exchange of ideas and inspiration. *Adapted from the Administrator's facebook page*

Proceedings began with His Honour introducing Ms Jones, who spoke about her life-long passion for bone health and congratulated our organisation for what we do on behalf of people with osteoporosis. Next, long term volunteer Ruth Garden spoke about our work in supporting those who have been diagnosed with osteoporosis. Referring to her dream of making a difference to the future incidence of osteoporosis, Ruth spoke of the regular opportunity to talk to teenagers at an annual high school Health Expo regarding the importance of developing healthy bones' awareness at an early age. She has been impressed by the genuine interest shown by students. This was followed by an address by geriatrician (Aged Care Specialist) Dr Angeline Simons on the devastating impact of osteoporosis-related fractures. Finally Dr Simons introduced Mrs Nola Sweetman who she had met in her professional capacity. Nola told her story of a severe ankle fracture early this year and what was involved in her recovery. We will share Nola's story with you in our next newsletter.



Ms Ruth Jones (left), Board Members (l to r) Hilary Fowler, Ruth Garden, Lyn Skipper and Frieda Evans

Seniors Craft and Chat

This group of seniors meets at Johnston Electorate community room every Tuesday from 10 am to 12 noon. The members are involved with many kinds of crafts: painting, knitting and much more. They invite a speaker each month and we were invited recently. Our Secretary Hilary Fowler spoke to the very interested group about arthritis and osteoporosis and what we do.



A painted bag given to Hilary as a thank you gift. This is a lovely example of their crafts.

Our website — www.aont.org.au

The Board is now currently working on the development of a new website. Any ideas from our members e.g. for pictures, information etc that could be included, will be very welcome. Contact us on 8948 5232.

August is Seniors Month in the NT!

Here are just a few of the events on offer ...

Wednesday 13th 10:30 to 11:30am

Dementia-friendly choir singing activity.

Tracy Village Sport and Social Club.

Hosted by the Dementia Alliance Darwin and Let's Sing! community choir.

Enquiries: jmarquez@hotmail.com 0448 988 573

letssingdarwin@gmail.com 0431 179 047



Let's Sing!

Friday 15th 9:30am to 1:00pm

"What a Pain! Self-management of chronic pain

AONT office, Rapid Creek.

Hosted by AONT

Enquiries & bookings: 8948 5232



Thursday 28th 12:00 to 2:00

Dementia Awareness info stand, including resources from Dementia Australia.

Palmerston library, Goyder square, Palmerston.

Hosted by the Dementia Alliance Darwin.

Enquiries: jmarquez@hotmail.com 0448 988 573



Every Tuesday 4:00 to 6:00pm

English Country (Playford) Dancing.

Pride and Prejudice style of genteel dancing to beautiful music.

Masonic Hall, Stokes Street, Parap.

Enquiries: Anna 8981 6400



Mix a little foolishness
with your serious plans; it's
lovely to be silly at the
right moment.

Horace



You drop something when you were
younger, you just pick it up.
When you're older and drop something,
you stare at it for a bit contemplating if
you actually need it anymore.

Information sessions

At the conclusion of each of our info sessions, as described on the front page, participants have the opportunity to provide feedback, and it is always positive!



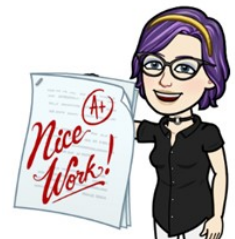
“great reassurance and group sharing..”

“great workshop, valuable info and engaging presenter”

“enjoyed relaxed atmosphere, update of new thinking”

All our info sessions can be tailored to suit the audience of the day. Similarly, when we have an invitation to provide a presentation to a community group, we take into account the interests of the group. Perhaps you know of a group who would welcome a guest speaker from AONT.

We have recently provided two different modified session to clients of Melaleuca Australia. In their role of supporting migrants, Melaleuca provided interpreters and AONT appreciates the opportunity to work collaboratively with other community based organisations.



Board Membership

There are currently seven vacancies for non-executive Board Members. Our AGM is only a few months away when all Board positions are automatically vacated. So this is a good time to consider putting up your hand for a short stint, without a long term commitment. The Board regularly meets each month for about an hour, with occasional special purpose meetings in between.



for your support



Obituary: Kay Brown, 1934 - 2025

Some of our very long term members will remember the irrepressible Kay Brown, who gave so much to our organisation. Kay served a term on the Board, worked in the office and for several years regularly delivered both warm water exercise and tai chi classes. Kay's warm water classes were the most popular of the many classes offered each week, with much laughter all round! Kay had a beautiful singing voice and together with Peg Gellert (also a long term volunteer) gave some wonderful performances as “Kay and Peg Unaccompanied”. Kay passed away early this year.

Photo at Right: Kay (left) with daughters Christina (middle) and Stephanie, in recent years, making up “The Gorgeous Club”.



Healthy blueberry banana bread

Prep: 15 min **Cook:** 60 min **Servings:** 9

Ingredients

- olive or canola oil spray
- 4 ripe bananas, peeled
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup reduced-fat milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 1 cup wholemeal self-raising flour
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 cup frozen blueberries



Method

1. Preheat oven to 220°C (200°C fan forced). Spray a 20 x 10cm loaf tin with oil; line base and sides with non-stick baking paper.
2. Reserve one whole banana for presentation and mash remaining 3 bananas in a large bowl (1 1/2 cups mashed).
3. Add sugar, milk and eggs and mix with a fork until well combined.
4. Sift flours and cinnamon on top of banana mixture, returning husks from the sieve to the bowl. Mix ingredients together until just combined, taking care not to over-mix, then gently fold through blueberries.
5. Spoon mixture into prepared loaf tin and smooth the surface. Slice remaining banana thinly and overlap slices on top of the loaf.
6. Bake for 35-40 minutes then cover with foil and bake for a further 20 minutes. Centre of loaf will remain moist but not wet when tested with a skewer. Allow to cool in tin for 5 minutes then turn onto a wire rack.
7. Cut into 1 cm slices and toast before serving, if desired.

Comment:

Once completely cooled, place in an airtight container and keep for up to 3 days. Slice and freeze individual pieces in snap lock bags and keep for up to 3 months.

Variation:

Replace blueberries with raspberries or dried fruit such as figs, cranberries, currants, sultanas, apricots or chopped dates. Substitute a grated apple or pear for one of the mashed bananas to vary the flavour.

Source: <https://livelighter.com.au/recipe/424/blueberry-banana-bread>

**The Arthritis
Foundation of the
Northern Territory Inc.**

Trading as
**Arthritis &
Osteoporosis NT**
ABN 67 099 326 608

Joint Patrons

His Honour
Professor the Honourable
Hugh Heggie PSM
Administrator of the NT
and Ms Ruth Jones

Vice Patron

The Honourable Vicki
O'Halloran AM CVO

Find us at

Shop 18 Rapid Creek
Business Village,
48 Trower Rd Millner

www.aont.org.au
[facebook.com/
arthritis.osteoporosis.nt](https://facebook.com/arthritis.osteoporosis.nt)

Contact us

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We are open

9:30am – 2:00pm
Monday to Thursday
(excluding Public Holidays)

Staff

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Deirdre Moldenhauer

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Natalie Valastro

Board

President

Ruth Quinn

Vice President

Amin Islam

Secretary

Hilary Fowler

**Treasurer and Public
Officer**

Ruth Garden

Ordinary Board Members

Lyn Skipper
Helgi Stone
Frieda Evans

What We Do

Our work includes:

- Responding to walk in and telephone enquiries Repeat this 10 times
- Providing personalised information packs in response to enquiries
- Hosting education sessions: “What a Pain!” and “Taking the first step”. Call the office on 8948 5232 for more details
- Providing information stands at a range of forums throughout the year
- Presentations to community groups
- Keeping in touch with other community health organisations and the services they provide
- Delivering bulk materials on request to a range of health services
- Producing this newsletter six times a year
- Liaising with Arthritis Australia, interstate arthritis affiliates and Healthy Bones Australia
- Making applications for various small grants to assist with special projects.

 **Arthritis &
Osteoporosis NT**
www.aont.org.au



Membership renewals

It's that time of the year again, annual membership falling due in July.

Thank you to those members who have already renewed. For those who haven't, a personalised renewal notice is included with this newsletter.

Renewals may be made in person, over the phone, using the internet or by post.

We appreciate the long term support of many of our members, and look forward to hearing from you.



Arthritis & Osteoporosis NT is
Proudly sponsored by



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