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*A new study out of Australia shows significant benefits to bone mineral density among postmenopausal women who participate in a twice-weekly exercise program.*

## THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE IN POSTMENOPAUSAL WOMEN

A February 2010 research study from the University of New South Wales examined the effect of an aerobic weight-bearing exercise program on bone mineral density (BMD) in postmenopausal women. The purpose of the study was to examine what specific role - if any - regular exercise had on BMD.

30 postmenopausal women were divided into two groups for the study. The first group (19 women, mean age 66.4 years) was assigned a two-year exercise program consisting of twice-weekly aerobic weight-bearing exercises. The second group (11 women, mean age 65.4 years) did not participate in an exercise program. Before and after the two-year study period, bone density measurements were taken at the spine and hip of each study participant.

At the end of the study, women in the exercise group experienced less than one-fourth the spinal BMD loss compared to the control group (-0.8 compared to -3.8, 95% CI 0.3-5.7% difference.) Results were even more impressive for the hip measurement, where the exercise group saw a 9.6% improvement compared to a 4.4% loss in the controls (14.0% difference, 95% CI 4.6-23.5.)

The authors of the study concluded: "this study adds strong evidence that twice-weekly weight-bearing aerobic exercise has a protective effect on bone density in postmenopausal women as well as being associated with other measurable benefits."

*Caplan GA, Ward JA, Lord SR. The benefits of exercise in postmenopausal women. 2010. Australian Journal of Public Health 17(1):23-6.*