

MEDITERRANEAN DIET WINS AGAIN, HELPS BONES

By Morgan Manella, CNN | Posted Mar 28th, 2016 @ 8:27pm

(CNN) — The Mediterranean diet is well-known for its health benefits on your heart and waistline, but now your bones could benefit too, according to a new study published online by JAMA Internal Medicine.

In this study, researchers examined whether diet quality affects bone health in postmenopausal women. They found that women who ate a Mediterranean diet were less likely to suffer from hip fractures.

The Mediterranean diet is relatively easy to follow. It involves eating vegetables, fruits, nuts, beans and peas, unrefined grains, olive oil and fish. You should limit the amount of meat, dairy, and saturated fat you eat.

Researchers analyzed data from 40 clinical centers throughout the United States included in the Women’s Health Initiative study. The analysis included 90,014 women with an average age of 64. Participants described their diets in a WHI food frequency questionnaire at the start of the study. Researchers then compared their dietary patterns to four common healthy diets, including the Mediterranean diet, the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) and two others.

Nearly 16 years later, there were 2,121 cases of hip fractures and 28,718 cases of total fractures.

Women who adhered the most to a Mediterranean diet were 29% less likely to suffer from a hip fracture than women who didn’t stick to the diet.

The other three diets showed negligible success.

“Our results provide assurance that widely recommended eating patterns do not increase the risk of fractures,” said lead study author Dr. Bernhard Haring of the University of Wurzburg in Germany. “This being said, the average woman should follow



a healthy lifestyle which includes adopting a healthy dietary pattern and being physically active.”

Osteoporosis-related fractures are a major burden for health care systems in aging societies, with women particularly affected, said Dr. Haring. Current research results have been inconclusive about whether intake of nutrients involved in bone metabolism can prevent fractures.

However, the results of this study suggest that a healthy diet, specifically a Mediterranean diet, might play a role in maintaining bone health in postmenopausal women.

This latest Mediterranean diet research builds on previous evidence that your health might benefit if you follow this diet. It’s been shown that the Mediterranean diet can keep your brain young, help you live longer, manage your weight better, and lower your risk for cancer and cardiovascular diseases.

“At the present time, the U.S. health system almost entirely ignores nutrition in favor of pharmacology and is hugely expensive and ineffective compared with the systems in other countries,” wrote Dr. Walter Willett of Harvard School of Public Health, in a related commentary. **“Integration of the Mediterranean diet and related dietary patterns into medical practice, hospitals, schools and other institutions has the potential to improve well-being.”**