\- Bones

Poor diet, lifestyle changes, lack of exercise affect bone health, say experts

Poor bone health can lead to an increased risk of pain and fractures that can further impact the mobility of an individual's living conditions.

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Experts say that sedentary lifestyle, low intake of calcium and dairy products and increased intake of caffeine and soda have attributed to a deterioration in bone health.

"The lack of even basic exercise such as walking or running weakens the bones. With ageing especially, the risk of fractures increases. Food patterns have changed and intake of items that have more sodium, can also affect the bone health," said Dr A Saravanan, orthopaedic surgeon, Kumaran Hospitals.

As people remain indoors, they do not receive adequate sunlight and vitamin D – both are required daily. "Everyday exposure to sunlight improves mineral density of the bone and strengthens them, reducing the risk of fractures," he said.

Orthopaedics add that diet patterns have changed due to lifestyle shifts, which is also impacting bone health. Especially in women, bone-related health issues such as osteoporosis have become common even among young women due to insufficient intake of nutrients.

"If calcium and vitamin D are inadequate in our food items it will adversely impact bone density. Dietary habits causing obesity can also be problematic. Alcohol can reduce the body's ability to absorb calcium. As we see increased alcohol consumption among youngsters, bones age quickly, weaken over time, and overall bone health is badly affected," explained Dr A Thineshchandar, orthopaedic surgeon, Lifeline Hospital.

He added that a diet rich in calcium, vitamin D and K, and the consumption of green and yellow vegetables should be increased, while fast food should be cut down.