

Birch Grove Sheltered Housing

Birch Grove provides a variety of accommodation including one bedroom flats for single residents and two bedroom bungalows for couples. The residents are all retired and in receipt of a state pension. Many of them live independently - shopping and cooking for themselves.

The live-in warden and staff team of carers maintain daily contact with the residents through routine cleaning, maintenance services and social activities. The district nurse calls regularly to provide support for those in need of medical care.



A central kitchen ensures that hot and cold meals and snacks are available at midday and in the evening for those residents who do not prepare their own meals. Sunday lunches are particularly popular and well attended

The carers at Birch Grove believe that a balanced diet providing all the necessary nutrients, regular exercise and active in mind and body and to enjoy a good 'quality of life'.



IRIS - Caterer

Iris runs the kitchen, and takes very care to provide a balanced diet for the residents, and to include some of their favourite dishes.



CHRIS – Occupational Therapist

Chris runs music and movement sessions twice a week and old time dancing on Wednesday afternoons.



DOROTHY - Warden

Dorothy makes sure that there programme of events every week. This includes a minibus trip to the shops, theatre or cinema. Visitors from the community and demonstrations, or drop in for a chat at regular intervals.

All the staff work together to make sure the residents feel secure, happy, healthy and active.

The staff at Birch Grove have produced a series of leaflets to provide information for residents on topics of interest, such as diet and health.

Osteoporosis

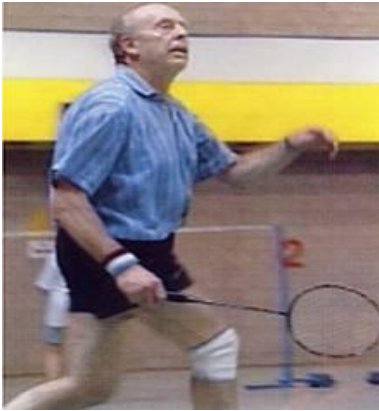
Osteoporosis is a condition which usually occurs:

- with increasing age;
- in bedridden or very inactive people (housebound);
- in women after the menopause.

There is a reduction in the density of bone due to loss of protein and calcium. This leads to bones becoming weak and breaking easily.

Other risk factors which can increase the rate of bone loss include:

- being underweight;
- too little exercise;
- too little vitamin D;
- high alcohol consumption;
- smoking;
- some medicines, e.g. steroids.



The Role of Diet in Osteoporosis

It is essential to have an adequate calcium intake throughout life. Men and women over 50 years of age are recommended to have 700mg of calcium per day.

There is some evidence that for older people, taking calcium supplements over a long period of time will reduce the rate at which bone density decreases in postmenopausal women. However the role of calcium in preventing or treating osteoporosis in elderly people remains uncertain. It is at least as important to build up strong bones during youth. However it is important to avoid very low intakes, especially by children, adolescents and young adults.

Foods Which Supply Calcium

Milk and dairy products are the main sources of calcium in the British diet. Fish with edible bones, white bread, cereal products, green vegetables and tap water in hard water areas can also be good sources of calcium. Supplements are rarely necessary and should be used on medical advice only.

Activity and Osteoporosis

It is important to take regular exercise. Exercise stresses the bones and helps keep them strong at any age.

Questions

1. What is osteoporosis?
2. Why do some elderly people suffer from it?
3. What are some ways to prevent it?
4. When is the best time to begin taking steps to prevent osteoporosis?
5. How well do you think the staff at Birch Grove help the elderly residents to avoid osteoporosis? (Explain your answer).

For further information, go to:

www.nutrition.org.uk/nutritionscience/disease/bone-and-joint-health