



4-H +Me = Health: Strong Bones

What will we learn? 4-H members will learn about the importance of calcium in their diet to develop and keep strong bones for a healthy life.

Why is this important? Many children do not get enough calcium in their diets. This activity will visually demonstrate how important calcium is for maintaining a healthy body.

Prep time needed: 24 hours minimum; preferably 2–3 days.

Activity length: 10 minutes

What will we need?

Preparation:

- Cooked, dry chicken or turkey bone
- Glass jar with lid
- White vinegar

At the meeting:

- Enough space for everyone in the group to sit comfortably

What do I need to do?

Preparation:

1. Place the dry bone in the jar and cover with vinegar. Place a lid on the jar.
2. Let the bone sit for at least one day, preferably two days or longer.

At the meeting:

1. Remove the bone from the jar, rinse, dry and allow 4-H members to feel it. It should be softer and more rubbery than a normal bone.

2. Explain that the vinegar (acid) represents soda and other acidic foods we choose to eat. When we replace calcium-rich milk with less nutritious choices, the same thing can happen to our bones! Acid can actually pull calcium from our bones. Over time, our bones become very weak and can break easily. This is called osteoporosis. This is why it's so important to get the calcium we need every day through milk (cow's milk, almond milk, coconut milk, etc.) and other dairy products. *Make sure that milk alternatives such as almond milk, coconut milk, etc. have calcium added!

Summary: Without calcium in our diets, our bones can suffer. Make sure to “feed” your bones by including dairy in your daily diet.

What 4-H projects does this activity connect with: Health and Nutrition

Snack connection: Make Your Own Yogurt “Sundae”

Ingredients:

- Vanilla Greek yogurt, refrigerated or frozen
- Granola
- Berries, fresh or frozen
- Bananas or other fruits
- Mini chocolate chips
- Almonds or other nuts
- Maraschino cherries

Directions: Create your own “sundae” with toppings!

Resources: <https://learning-center.homesciencetools.com/article/skeletons-and-bones-science-projects/>