Osteogenesis imperfecta (OI) is a lifelong disorder. OI changes as people age. There may be fewer fractures, but more problems with tendons, hearing, lungs or heart. The keys to living well with OI are **weight management, healthy diet, appropriate exercise, avoiding illness and maintaining bone mass**. Start taking steps to put yourself in charge of your health today.

1. Know your own OI history.
2. Find a Primary Care Physician and an orthopedist before there is an emergency.
3. Have an annual physical: your basic health needs are the same as a person without OI.
4. Know your medicines; dosage, side effects, and how to take them. Carry a list with you.
5. Know your numbers for Blood Pressure, Bone Density, Cholesterol, and Pulmonary Function.
7. Get the pneumonia vaccine and the annual flu shot; you are at risk for lung infections.
8. Seek medical care immediately for every respiratory infection. Respiratory problems are a leading cause of OI related death.
9. Report any changes in pain to your doctor; do not assume “it’s just OI.”
10. Take care of your general health -- it makes a difference!

   a. Exercise as possible in a safe and regular manner.
   b. Maintain a healthy weight; extra weight is a strain on your skeleton and heart.
   c. Do not smoke and avoid secondhand smoke; smoke harms bones and lungs.
   d. Follow a healthy diet with adequate amounts of calcium and vitamin D.
   e. Protect your hearing.
   f. Use sunscreen; OI makes skin more fragile and a little thinner.
   g. Develop healthy ways of coping with stress and anxiety.
   h. Develop a variety of techniques for coping with pain.

For more information on these topics and others see the OI Foundation website section “Especially For Adults.”

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