



## Bones and Muscles

This month in THE GREAT BODY SHOP, your child will learn all about growth, movement, and protection from injury in an issue on muscles and bones. Please reinforce this material by talking about it at home.

**Lesson 1:** Bones

**Lesson 2:** Muscles

**Lesson 3:** Physical Activity and Environment

**Lesson 4:** What Makes a Great Body

## Check Out Those Bones

The next time you prepare chicken for dinner, take some time to examine the muscles and bones before cooking. Snap a bone in half to see the jelly-like marrow inside. The marrow is where the red blood cells are made.

Point out some of the cartilage running through the meat. Have your child feel it to get an idea of how strong, yet flexible, it is. Be sure to wash your hands, utensils, and all surfaces after handling raw meat!

## Food for Bones

Remind your children that their teeth and bones need lots of calcium to stay strong. A glass of milk or a container of yogurt has lots of calcium in it. (Choose low-fat varieties of each.) Other calcium rich foods are oranges, broccoli, kale, and collard greens. Canned salmon and sardines are also loaded with calcium.

## Exercise for Bones

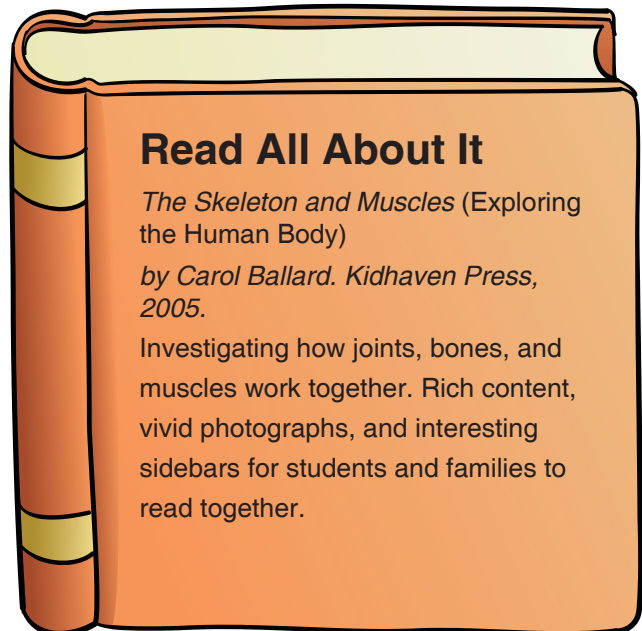
Bone strengthening exercises are a must for good health. Kids need to do these kinds of activities at least three times a week, as part of their sixty minutes a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity. Try jumping rope, push-ups, pull-ups, and running for your bone health.

## Steroid Scare

In school, we'll talk about drugs called steroids. Steroids are hormone-like drugs that some teens and athletes take to quickly build bigger, stronger muscles. Approximately one million Americans, half of them teenagers, take steroids illegally. Most of these teens said they began taking steroids before age 16. These drugs can:

- stunt growth, cause acne
- lead to severe liver problems
- result in mood swings and violent behavior
- cause baldness, beard growth, a deeper voice, and other male characteristics in girls
- cause breast growth and other female characteristics in boys
- contribute to heart disease
- result in infertility problems

Make sure your child knows that winning with steroids is not really winning at all. These drugs are not only dangerous, they're against the law. A good athlete wins by working hard, not by taking drugs.



### Read All About It

*The Skeleton and Muscles* (Exploring the Human Body)

by Carol Ballard. Kidhaven Press, 2005.

Investigating how joints, bones, and muscles work together. Rich content, vivid photographs, and interesting sidebars for students and families to read together.

### “What Do You Think” Answers:

1. Surprise! Both you and the giraffe have seven vertebrae in your neck—the giraffe's vertebrae are just much bigger.
2. Astronauts are taller on the moon. That's because there is no gravity on the moon, and their bones can spread apart a little!
3. Your leg would heal five times faster! That's because your bones are still growing and your mom's stopped growing long ago.
4. The gluteus maximus! Without it, you couldn't stand up straight or walk up stairs.