

## Understanding and Preventing Metabolic Bone Disease

Let's have a chat about something important: Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD). Now, this might sound like a mouthful, but trust me, it's worth flapping your wings over! MBD tends to crop up when our diets aren't quite hitting the mark. You see, we magpies need a balanced mix of nutrients like calcium, phosphorus, and Vitamin D3 to keep our bones strong and healthy. But with all this urbanisation happening, our diets can sometimes stray from what's best for us. That's why it's so crucial for our human buddies to understand the importance of offering us nutritious options.

When we don't get enough of these important nutrients, it messes with our bones and can cause all sorts of problems like deformities, making it harder for us to move around and stay healthy. But don't stress! By paying attention to what we eat and making sure we're getting the good stuff, we can keep MBD away and keep feeling magnificent!

Sometimes our well-meaning pals might not realise that the snacks they're sharing with us aren't quite hitting the spot in terms of nutrition. But hey, it's nobody's fault, really. It's just a matter of learning from our experiences and finding that perfect balance for the future.

What our parents eat during egg development and chick-rearing is crucial! It impacts our health and the quality of eggs they lay. If they lack the right nutrients or consume too much of the wrong ones, it can lead to BIG trouble, including MBD. This affects chicks' health and can impact us from birth. So, it's vital for our parents to eat well for our well-being and survival!

### Symptoms of Metabolic Bone Disease May Include:

**Difficulty in Movement:** We may exhibit difficulty in perching, walking, or flying due to weakened bones.

**Seizures and Tremors:** In severe cases, you might notice neurological symptoms like seizures or tremors.

- Soft, brittle or fractured beaks
- Poor feather growth
- Fractures or abnormalities in bones
- Deformities in skeletal structure
- Weakness or brittleness in claws or keel bone
- Swelling of the parathyroid glands - These small glands are located near the thyroid in our necks. They make a hormone called parathyroid hormone (PTH), which helps control calcium levels in our bodies. PTH tells our bones when to release calcium, helps our kidneys hold onto calcium, and helps our bodies absorb calcium from food.

As MBD progresses, the body may try to fix these imbalances by making more parathyroid hormone. While MBD itself doesn't directly cause the glands to swell, the body's attempt to balance things out might lead to the glands getting bigger over time.

Some MBD symptoms aren't obvious at first. But no worries! Blood tests and X-rays can help us catch it early.

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## Primary MBD Culprits



**Perpetrator 1**  
**MINCE**



**Perpetrator 2**  
**BREAD**



**Perpetrator 3**  
**JUNK FOOD**

Identifying the primary culprits is essential in combating MBD among us magpies. We face dietary challenges that can lead to this debilitating condition. While bread, plain minced meat, and junk food may seem like convenient treats, they're seriously lacking the good stuff we magpies need to keep our bones strong and healthy! These foods are low on the essentials like calcium and phosphorus, which are crucial for maintaining bone density and strength.

Let's focus on the main three notorious perpetrators and their impact on our health. Let's bring them to justice one by one!

- 1. Plain Mince:** Seems all innocent when you first peck at it, but watch out! It's not as harmless as it looks! That's because it contains high levels of phosphate, which leach calcium right outta' our bones. That's right, mate, calcium depletion weakens our skeletal structure over time, making us more vulnerable to conditions like MBD. Despite its savoury appeal, plain minced meat is a sneaky culprit, silently chipping away at our bone health.
- 2. Bread:** It's everywhere, right? Tempting with its soft fluffiness, but it's all carbs, no good stuff. All those empty calories leave us feeling sluggish and bloated, and worse yet, they mess with our calcium levels. Too much of this stuff can mess with our bones, big time. It's like letting a sneaky suspect slip through our fingers. Gotta watch out for those empty carbs – they're trouble with a capital 'T'!
- 3. Junk Food:** You know, all those tempting snacks that make your mouth water? They're not exactly doing us magpies any favours. Loaded with sugar, salt, and who-knows-what-else, they're no good for us, mate. So when we fill up on chippies instead of healthy food, we're missing out on important stuff like calcium. And that can lead to MBD, a real pain in the tail feathers!

So, next time you're tempted by these sneaky culprits, think twice and opt for [healthier alternatives](#) that'll keep our bones strong and our bodies happy!



Metabolic Bone Disease, a fearsome foe,  
Strikes us magpies with a mighty blow!  
Munching on the wrong stuff, oh, it's not right,  
Can weaken our bones, dimming our light.  
Especially in the youngsters who are still growing,  
It's vital to keep the right nutrients flowing!

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