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WebMD Smile

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Life is a balancing act
for *Private Practice's*
Amy Brenneman

personal best

Actor Amy Brenneman's healthy balancing act

Actor Amy Brenneman of ABC's *Private Practice* fame is in fine form these days. The Emmy- and Golden Globe-nominated star has finally learned "how to be nicer to myself" and put herself first more often.

Juggling a hit TV show while raising two kids (daughter Charlotte is 10 and son Bodhi is 6) with husband of 16 years, film writer/director Brad Silberling, Brenneman struggles to fit everything into 24 hours a day. And to stay sane—and physically sound—while doing it.

"I'm lucky because I have help," Brenneman, 47, admits. "I think that for working parents, a big dirty secret that no one wants to talk about is finding child care that you trust. But unless you can hand off your precious children in a safe way, you can't find time [for work and other pursuits] or have a clear conscience."

Taking Good Care

In an effort to better care for herself, Brenneman works with a nutritionist, Los Angeles-based Ashley Koff, RD, who made small but important changes to the star's diet. She avoids raw foods, seeds, and nuts, and tries to stay well-hydrated.

Brenneman also makes exercise a priority but not an obsession. "I've always been fit. I'm lucky...I have an internal clock, and I know when to move my body. And I have a wonderful trainer. I wandered into this hardcore Pilates place [last year], and she worked me out. Also, one of the great releases for me is to go running."

By Lauren Paige Kennedy
WebMD Contributing Writer



"I don't drive myself so hard now. I try to stay in touch with my intuition as to how my day should go."

Healthy Living

Being pulled in so many directions—production schedules, kid commitments, red carpets—does take its toll. For years Brenneman suffered flare-ups of ulcerative colitis, a condition of the colon where inflammation and ulcers develop in the intestinal lining. Her health forced the *Judging Amy* and *NYPD Blue* alum to reevaluate how thin she could be stretched—metaphorically and literally.

"I lost a scary amount of weight while I was doing everything I could to avoid getting the surgery," Brenneman says, referring to the course of treatment recommended by her doctors.

"I'm normally 130 pounds, but I got down to 105. Not good." She underwent two operations in 2010. The result? I'm doing really, really well. I feel great. And I'm so grateful," she says.

The unexpected bonus: "I don't drive myself so hard now," she explains, even if "I do drive people around me crazy at times. I schedule things a week or two out front. Then, as I get closer to the day—and if it's not putting people out—if I don't feel like it, I won't go.

"I try to stay in touch with my intuition as to how my day should go...there are lots of things we don't have control over. But I don't shame myself over it...I try to have compassion for myself."

No Tiger Mom

She applies this newfound philosophy to parenting, too. If her son isn't up for T-ball practice, for instance, Brenneman won't force him to go.

"I was talking with other moms," she says of his practices, "who were saying, 'It's important for him to follow through on a commitment.' And I'm thinking, 'Gosh, he's 5.' So I told him: 'I don't really care if you do T-ball. It doesn't matter at all.'"

When it comes to the "tiger mom" approach of pushing and over-scheduling children, Brenneman says, "I'm just not into it. I told Bodhi, 'There are certain things we have to do. We have to go to school. We have to be kind to one another. What we're not going to do is make you go [to practice]."

Reviewed by
Louise Chang, MD
WebMD MEDICAL EDITOR



So, you take a minute to decide.' And he did. Then he went and really enjoyed it. I took the heat off around it—and decided to do that in my own life."

As a career actress now closer to 50 than 40 who didn't land in Hollywood until her mid-20s, Brenneman takes a remarkably measured approach to aging.

"I have the greatest husband in the world. I'm not out there dating. And my husband takes a really dim view of men and women...who've had too much work done. He makes me feel beautiful."

Brenneman laughs again, something she does easily and often. With her life in balance, her health better than it's been in years, and yet another hit series on her hands, what doesn't she have to smile about? ■

3 things that make Amy smile

1 "Sergio, my makeup artist!" (Sergio is making up Brenneman's face during her WebMD interview before she hits the *Private Practice* set to do a scene.) "He makes me so happy!"

2 "My children's belly laughs—priceless!"

3 "Bloopers," the actor adds, rather unexpectedly. "I was watching the *Private Practice* blooper reels the other day, and they cracked me up. I love when people who are supposed to have it all together mess up."

ON THE COVER AND LEFT: BRIAN BOWEN SMITH/AUGUST

Find more expert tips on healthy living and **balancing it all.**



WebMD.com

Say Cheese

Which foods keep your smile bright?



true or false?

Is laughing really good for my health?

Studies have indeed found an association between laughter and positive health effects, including an increased heart rate, improved blood flow, dulled pain, and lowered blood sugar levels in people with diabetes.

But the idea that laughter has long-lasting effects is probably FALSE—or at least has not been proven to be true, says Robert Provine, PhD, professor of psychology at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and author of *Laughter: A Scientific Investigation*.

“It’s unclear if laughter has more of a medicinal effect than saying ‘ha-ha,’ singing, yelling, or jumping up and down,” he says. Moreover, Provine adds, the health benefits connected to laughing may really be due to other factors. “The essential ingredient for laughter is another person, not a joke,” he says.

It then follows, he explains, that any medicinal benefits assumed for laughter might be the result of its social context, “not of barking ha-ha... laughter is literally the sound of play.”

Q ▶ I know coffee stains my teeth, but are there any foods that will help keep them looking white and healthy?

A ▶ Regular brushing and flossing are your best bets for keeping your teeth healthy. But yes, certain foods can keep your smile looking bright by contributing to your overall oral health.

For instance, foods that increase saliva production help wash food off your teeth, as well as neutralize the acids produced by foods as you chew them—acids that can erode tooth enamel and contribute to tooth decay. Those foods include sugar-free gum and drinks, cheese, and milk.

Preventing gum disease is also crucial for keeping your teeth healthy and your smile beautiful. Fish and flaxseed are both rich sources of omega-3 fatty acids, which prevent inflammation and may help protect against gum disease.

Foods to avoid, by the way, include sugary drinks and snacks (the sugar creates bacteria that increase acids that can erode tooth enamel and lead to cavities); some starchy foods such as rice, potatoes, and pasta (which also raise acid levels in the mouth); and, yes, coffee, tea, and red wine, which can stain teeth. Choose water and sugar-free drinks as often as you can—they help wash acid-producing food from your mouth.



Eric Yabu, DDS
WebMD DENTAL EXPERT

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You want to do all you can to fight postmenopausal osteoporosis, and vitamin D, exercise, and calcium-rich foods can help. But they may not be enough to keep your bones strong. Ask your doctor if once-monthly BONIVA can help you do more. BONIVA may increase bone mass to help women have stronger, healthier bones.

Ask your doctor if BONIVA is right for you.

BONIVA is a prescription medicine used to treat or prevent osteoporosis in women after menopause. BONIVA helps increase bone mass and helps reduce the chance of having a spinal fracture (break). It is not known how long BONIVA works for the treatment and prevention of osteoporosis. You should see your doctor regularly to determine if BONIVA is still right for you.

Important Safety Information: You should not take BONIVA if you have certain problems with your esophagus (the tube that connects your mouth and stomach), low blood calcium, cannot sit or stand for at least 60 minutes, or are allergic to BONIVA or any of its ingredients.

BONIVA can cause serious side effects including problems with the esophagus; low blood calcium; bone, joint, or muscle pain; severe jaw bone problems; and unusual thigh bone fractures.

Before starting BONIVA, tell your doctor if you have problems with swallowing, stomach or digestive problems, have low blood calcium, plan to have dental surgery or teeth removed, or have kidney problems.

Stop taking BONIVA and tell your doctor right away if you have pain or trouble swallowing, chest pain, or severe or continuing heartburn, as these may be signs of serious upper digestive problems. Call your doctor immediately if jaw problems or hip, groin, or thigh pain develops; or if you have symptoms of low blood calcium such as spasms, twitching, cramps in your muscles, or numbness or tingling in your fingers, toes, or around your mouth.

Follow the dosing instructions for once-monthly BONIVA carefully.

The most common side effects are back pain, heartburn, stomach area pain, pain in your arms and legs, diarrhea, headache, muscle pain, and flu-like symptoms.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA at www.fda.gov/medwatch or by calling 1-800-FDA-1088.

Talk to your doctor for more information or if you have questions about your treatment.

Please see Medication Guide for additional important safety information.

Enroll today. Call 1-888-434-6193 or visit BONIVAFreetrial.com and try BONIVA free.

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once-monthly
Boniva®
ibandronate sodium
150 mg tablet

BON0000297500

Medication Guide

BONIVA® [bon-EE-va] (ibandronate sodium) TABLETS

Read the Medication Guide that comes with BONIVA before you start taking it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This Medication Guide does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or your treatment. Talk to your doctor if you have any questions about BONIVA.

What is the most important information I should know about BONIVA?

BONIVA can cause serious side effects including:

1. Esophagus problems
2. Low calcium levels in your blood (hypocalcemia)
3. Bone, joint or muscle pain
4. Severe jaw bone problems (osteonecrosis)
5. Unusual thigh bone fractures

1. Esophagus problems. Some people who take BONIVA may develop problems in the esophagus (the tube that connects the mouth and the stomach). These problems include irritation, inflammation, or ulcers of the esophagus, which may sometimes bleed.

• **It is important that you take BONIVA exactly as prescribed to help lower your chance of getting esophagus problems. (See the section “How should I take BONIVA?”)**

• **Stop taking BONIVA and call your doctor right away if you get chest pain, new or worsening heartburn, or have trouble or pain when you swallow.**

2. Low calcium levels in your blood (hypocalcemia). BONIVA may lower the calcium levels in your blood. If you have low blood calcium before you start taking BONIVA, it may get worse during treatment. Your low blood calcium must be treated before you take BONIVA. Most people with low blood calcium levels do not have symptoms, but some people may have symptoms. Call your doctor right away if you have symptoms of low blood calcium such as:

- Spasms, twitches, or cramps in your muscles
- Numbness or tingling in your fingers, toes, or around your mouth

Your doctor may prescribe calcium and vitamin D to help prevent low calcium levels in your blood while you take BONIVA. Take calcium and vitamin D as your doctor tells you to.

3. Bone, joint, or muscle pain. Some people who take BONIVA develop severe bone, joint, or muscle pain.

4. Severe jaw bone problems (osteonecrosis). Severe jaw bone problems may happen when you take BONIVA. Your doctor may examine your mouth before you start BONIVA. Your doctor may tell you to see your dentist before you start BONIVA. It is important for you to practice good mouth care during treatment with BONIVA.

5. Unusual thigh bone fractures. Some people have developed unusual fractures in their thigh bone. Symptoms of a fracture may include new or unusual pain in your hip, groin, or thigh. **Call your doctor right away if you have any of these side effects. What is BONIVA?**

BONIVA is a prescription medicine used to treat or prevent osteoporosis in women after menopause. BONIVA helps increase bone mass and helps reduce the chance of having a spinal fracture (break). It is not

known how long BONIVA works for the treatment and prevention of osteoporosis. You should see your doctor regularly to determine if BONIVA is still right for you. It is not known if BONIVA is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take BONIVA?

Do not take BONIVA if you:

- Have certain problems with your esophagus, the tube that connects your mouth with your stomach
- Cannot stand or sit upright for at least 60 minutes
- Have low levels of calcium in your blood
- Are allergic to BONIVA or any of its ingredients. A list of ingredients is at the end of this leaflet.

What should I tell my doctor before taking BONIVA?

Before you start BONIVA, be sure to talk to your doctor if you:

- Have problems with swallowing
- Have stomach or digestive problems
- Have low blood calcium
- Plan to have dental surgery or teeth removed
- Have kidney problems
- Have been told you have trouble absorbing minerals in your stomach or intestines (malabsorption syndrome)
- Are pregnant, or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if BONIVA can harm your unborn baby.
- Are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. It is not known if BONIVA passes into your milk and may harm your baby.

Tell your doctor and dentist about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Certain medicines may affect how BONIVA works. Especially tell your doctor if you take:

- antacids
- aspirin
- Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory (NSAID) medicines

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them and show it to your doctor and pharmacist each time you get a new medicine.

How should I take BONIVA?

• Take BONIVA exactly as your doctor tells you.

• **BONIVA works only if taken on an empty stomach.**

• Take 1 BONIVA tablet **after** you get up for the day and **before** taking your first food, drink, or other medicine.

• Take BONIVA while you are sitting or standing.

• **Do not chew or suck on a tablet of BONIVA.**

• Swallow BONIVA tablet with a full glass (6-8 oz) of plain water only.

• Do **not** take BONIVA with mineral water, coffee, tea, soda, or juice.

After swallowing BONIVA tablet, wait at least 60 minutes:

- Before you lie down. You may sit, stand or walk, and do normal activities like reading.
- Before you take your first food or drink except for plain water.
- Before you take other medicines, including antacids, calcium, and other supplements and vitamins.

Do not lie down for at least 60 minutes after you take BONIVA and do not eat your first food of the day for at least 60 minutes after you take BONIVA.

• If you miss a dose of BONIVA, do not take it later in the day. Call your doctor for instructions.

• If you take too much BONIVA, call your doctor. Do not try to vomit. Do not lie down.

What are the possible side effects of BONIVA?

BONIVA may cause serious side effects.

• See “**What is the most important information I should know about BONIVA?**”

The most common side effects of BONIVA are:

- Back pain
- Heartburn
- Stomach area (abdominal) pain
- Pain in your arms and legs
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Flu-like symptoms

You may get allergic reactions, such as hives or, in rare cases, swelling of your face, lips, tongue or throat. Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of BONIVA. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

How do I store BONIVA?

- Store BONIVA at room temperature, 59°F to 86°F (15°C to 30°C).
- Keep BONIVA in a tightly closed container.

Keep BONIVA and all medicines out of the reach of children.

General information about the safe and effective use of BONIVA.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication Guide. Do not use BONIVA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give BONIVA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

This Medication Guide summarizes the most important information about BONIVA. If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about BONIVA that is written for health professionals.

For more information, go to:

www.myboniva.com or call 1-888-692-6648

What are the ingredients in BONIVA?

Active ingredient: ibandronate sodium
Inactive ingredients: lactose monohydrate, povidone, microcrystalline cellulose, crospovidone, purified stearic acid, colloidal silicon dioxide, and purified water. Tablet film coating contains: hypromellose, titanium dioxide, talc, polyethylene glycol 6000 and purified water.

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oral care

Root Cause

The mouth-body connection explained

When Joanne Maglares, now 50, visited her dentist for a broken tooth from chewing on ice, she had no inkling that her overall health was in jeopardy. A scholarship coordinator at a New York City high school and mother of four, she was so consumed with work and family that she often ignored her own well-being.

But her dentist took one look at her mouth, noticed multiple tooth fractures and rapidly advancing gum (periodontal) disease, and surmised that she had an underlying health problem. “Those were red flags that something was not right,” says her dentist Maria Emanuel Ryan, DDS, PhD, professor of oral biology and pathology at Stony Brook University School of Dental Medicine.

Ryan urged Maglares to see her primary care doctor to get to the root of the problem. She was diagnosed and treated for high blood pressure and anemia. Five months later, she suffered a massive heart attack.

Researchers know there’s a synergic relationship between oral health and overall wellness. Gum disease is linked to a host of illnesses including heart disease, diabetes, respiratory disease, osteoporosis, and rheumatoid arthritis. By combing through 1,000-plus medical histories, researchers

at the University of North Carolina School of Dentistry found that people with gum disease were twice as likely as others to die from a heart attack and three times as likely to have a stroke.

Gum disease is the most common chronic inflammatory condition in the world, yet it’s often a silent disease, Ryan says. Why? The mouth can act as a portal of entry for an infection, says Salomon Amar, DMD, PhD, professor and director at the Center for Anti-inflammatory Therapeutics at Boston University School of Dental Medicine. Ongoing inflammation in your mouth can allow bacteria to enter the bloodstream, which may lead to more inflammation in other parts of your body, such as the heart.

Some studies point to a reciprocal relationship between gum disease and diabetes. “When you treat and control diabetes, immediately the condition in the mouth improves. And when you treat periodontal disease, the need for insulin is reduced,” Amar says.

Maglares is on the road to recovery and indebted to her dentist. “If I hadn’t gone to the dentist, I don’t know if I’d be alive today. I pay a lot more attention to my teeth and gums. I believe it’s all connected.”—Jennifer Soong

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