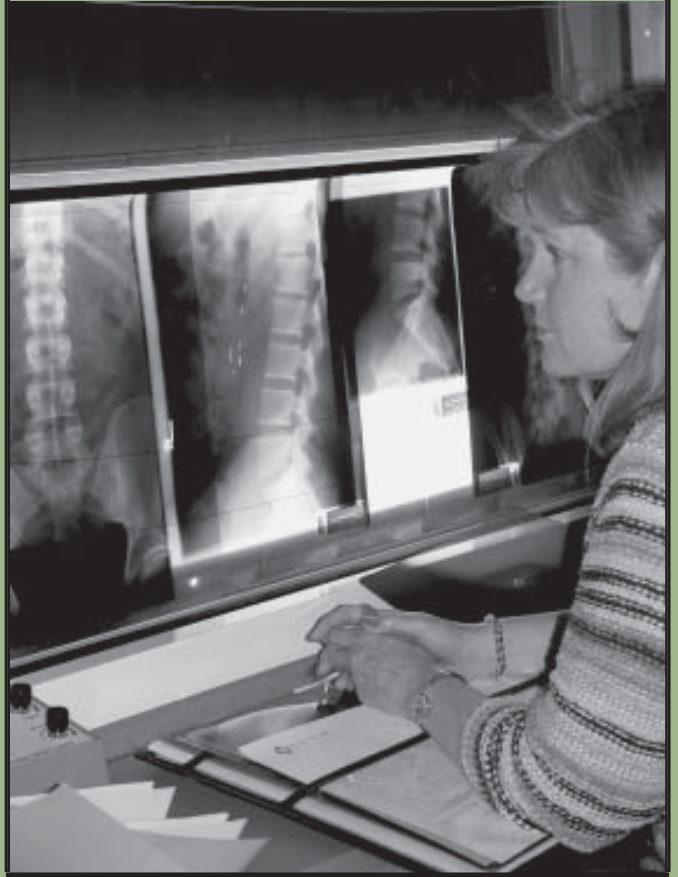


Printing Instructions:

The pages of this brochure appear in non-consecutive order. Print the document using your printer's two-sided feature and fold each page lengthwise to create the brochure booklet.

Preventing Osteoporosis



What you should know about osteoporosis



- Osteoporosis is a DISEASE and not an inevitable part of aging.
- Osteoporosis is a disease that causes your body to lose more bone than is replaced. This condition makes bones less dense and more breakable. The most commonly affected bones are those of the spine, wrist, and hip.

Often, one of the first signs of osteoporosis is a bone fracture. But there are easy, low cost ways to prevent or slow down osteoporosis. You can take steps, even if you have already had a fracture, to prevent further fractures and disability. *It is never too late to start an osteoporosis prevention program and make it part of your daily life.*

To order brochures contact:

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How many people in the US have osteoporosis?

- Among the population age 50 and older, 8.1 million women and 2 million men have osteoporosis.
- More than one-half of all people age 50 and older have low bone mass, a condition called *osteopenia*, which will progress to osteoporosis unless it is stopped.
- The risk for women age 50 and older to develop an osteoporotic fracture equals their combined risk of developing breast, uterine, and ovarian cancers.
- 1.5 million osteoporotic fractures occur each year. Of these, 300,000 are hip fractures, 700,000 are vertebral fractures, and 250,000 are wrist fractures.



Other things you can do:

- Ask your family and friends as well as your general practitioner, endocrinologist, gynecologist, internist, orthopedist, or rheumatologist about osteoporosis.
- Look for other places where you could find professional help for osteoporosis, such as university hospitals, community hospitals, or academic health centers.
- Go to presentations on osteoporosis or related health topics.
- Read brochures, newsletters, and health magazines.
- Contact your Area Agency on Aging or Senior Center about programs or seminars such as, The Gait Assessment and Safety Program (GASP) that helps seniors make lifestyle changes to avoid falls.
- Find out about resources in your community, such as support groups, senior centers, malls that open early for walking, and exercise facilities that offer senior discounts and personal trainers.

Get information from:

The National Osteoporosis Foundation

website: www.nof.org

phone: 202-223-2226,

fax: 202-223-2237,

mail: 1232-22nd Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037-1292.

The National Institutes of Health-Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases National Resource Center

phone: 1-800-624-BONE or 202-223-0344

fax: 202-293-2356

mail: 1232-22nd Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037-1292.



Osteoporosis can affect your quality of life.

Osteoporosis and its complications can affect both your physical and social life. For example, osteoporotic fractures of the spine might result in loss of height, a curved spine or hump, mobility limitation, and chronic back pain. Osteoporotic fractures of the hip might require institutional care for recovery, and can result in difficulties with daily activities such as walking, eating, dressing, and grooming.

Who is at risk for osteoporosis

While some risk factors are related to lifestyle and can be changed, some are inherited or biological.

Tips

Do not allow the fear of falls to control your life. You can easily make changes in your house, clothing, and lifestyle to protect you from falling.

Household Tips:

- Keep the floors uncluttered, and remove loose wires and cords, and slippery rugs.
- Cover slippery floors with well-fastened rugs, or nonskid floor wax.
- Keep your house well lit by placing night-lights throughout the house.
- Install handrails on both sides of stairwells, grab bars in the bathroom, and a non-skid rubber mat in the bath/shower tub.

Clothing Tips:

- Wear comfortable, nonskid, low-heeled shoes, and avoid loose-fitting slippers.
- Do not wear socks on polished bare floors.
- Avoid very long garments that might cause you to trip.

Lifestyle Tips:

- Have your vision and hearing checked regularly.
- Ask your pharmacist whether the medications you take can affect your walking and balance.
- Do not get up too quickly from your bed, sofa, or chair.
- Use a cane or a walker if you have walking or balance problems.
- Be careful when walking on wet, uneven, or cracked surfaces.
- Be careful when walking in crowded, dark, or sloping areas.

Talk to your family and friends to find the best ways to make your life safe, healthy, active, and free from fall risks.



Risk factors for osteoporosis:

- Age - Osteoporosis progresses with age and is one of the diseases most frequently found among seniors.
- Gender - Women are at higher risk because menopause brings about significant bone mass loss, BUT men also are affected and often experience poorer recovery after a hip fracture, often requiring nursing home placement.
- Race - Caucasian and Asian women are at higher risk, BUT African-American and Hispanic women are also affected.
- Body Type - Small-boned and thin women are at greater risk.
- Family History - Personal or family history of osteoporotic fractures leads to higher risk.

How to minimize the threat of osteoporosis:

- Eat a healthy diet with enough calcium and vitamin D.
- Do not smoke, and drink alcohol moderately.
- Maintain an active lifestyle and perform weight-bearing exercises regularly.
- Have your bones checked with a bone mineral density (BMD) test.

Prevention



None of these four steps alone will be as effective as all four.

Every small increase in bone mass can reduce your risk of having an osteoporotic fracture. Here are more suggestions about what you can do to prevent or slow down osteoporosis.

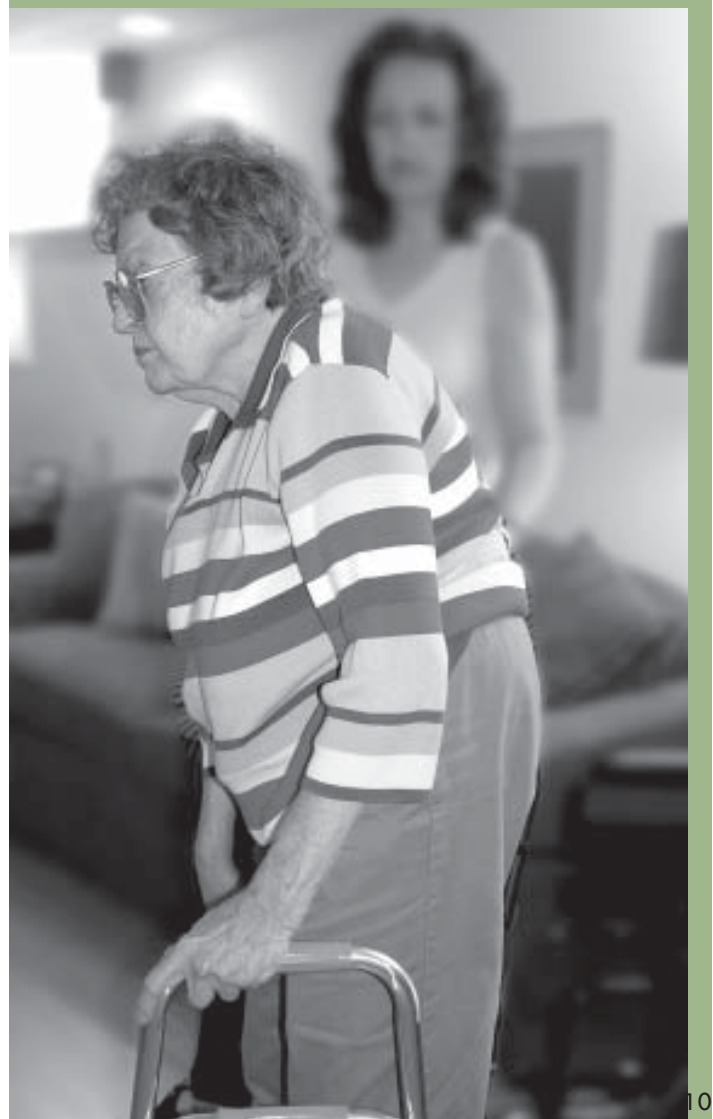
1. Eat a healthy diet with enough Calcium and Vitamin D

You need **calcium and vitamin D** together because your body needs vitamin D to absorb and process calcium. A healthy diet is especially important in old age because calcium absorption as well as vitamin D production decrease with age. You can get calcium and vitamin D from food and/or from supplements. In addition, vitamin D is produced naturally in your skin through sun exposure.

Persons age 50 and older should get **1200-1500mg calcium and 400-800IU of vitamin D per day from food and/or from supplements**. If you don't eat any dairy products or other calcium-rich foods you may only be getting 200-300mg of calcium a day. Read food labels and estimate the amount of calcium and vitamin D in your diet. If your diet has less calcium and vitamin D than recommended you should get the rest from supplements.

Medicare pays for this test and for follow-up tests every two years. Sometimes your doctor may recommend the test more frequently.

If your test indicates bone loss ask your doctor about the benefits, side effects, and cost of prescription osteoporosis medication. There is a large variety of prescription medication to treat osteoporosis and you should be fully informed before starting a therapy recommended by your doctor. Even if your doctor puts you on medication or you have already had an osteoporotic fracture you should continue to work on prevention activities.



BMD Test



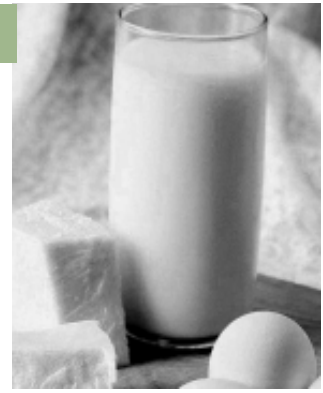
4. Have your bones checked with a Bone Mineral Density (BMD) Test

The Bone Mineral Density (BMD) test measures the density of your bones quickly and painlessly using a very low radiation exposure.

The BMD test is useful in that it provides you with:

- An accurate diagnosis of osteoporosis and osteopenia (its earlier stage), allowing you to start a prevention and/or therapeutic program before having a fracture;
- Your future chance of having osteoporosis-related fractures;
- The changes that occur in your bone density over time;
- A measurement of your bones' response to therapy.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to suggest some calcium and vitamin D supplements.



When possible, take several small doses throughout the day to maximize calcium absorption. Be careful about how you choose supplements.

Look for:

- Purified components (the label either should mention “purified” or have the United States Pharmacopoeia-USP symbol)
- Tablets that dissolve in your stomach (the label should indicate the manufacturer’s proof of USP standards of disintegration);

Avoid:

- Calcium from oyster shell, bone meal, or dolomite because supplements may contain high levels of toxic metals.
- Calcium from antacids with high amounts of aluminum because aluminum reduces the absorption of calcium.

Dietary sources of calcium

- Low fat dairy products: milk, cheese, yogurt, ice-cream. If you have lactose-intolerance eat yogurt with active cultures, hard cheeses, or drink milk with food to prevent digestive discomfort, or ask your doctor about lactase products.
- Non-dairy sources: sardines, salmon, or mackerel canned with bones; broccoli, turnip greens, collard greens, bok choy, green beans, and foods fortified with calcium.

Sources of vitamin D

- Environmental: 15 minutes of sun exposure 2-3 times a week should be enough for your skin to naturally produce vitamin D, BUT the sun's effects are reduced by sunscreen and the weaker winter sun.
- Dietary: fatty fish and fish oil, eggs, liver, butter, milk, and foods fortified with vitamin D.

2. Maintain a healthy lifestyle with no smoking and moderate drinking

Smoking and heavy alcohol consumption speed up bone loss, and increase the chance of fractures. Moderate drinking means one drink a day for women and two drinks a day for men. After age 65, it is recommended to cut this amount by one-half because one's body is less able to properly process alcohol. A drink means either 12 ounces of beer, 4-5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor.

3. Do regular weight bearing exercises

Weight-bearing exercises are exercises in which you support your own body weight, such as walking, stair climbing, jogging, dancing, hiking, aerobics, Tai Chi, and racquet sports.



Exercising brings benefits to your:

- bones by maintaining mass and strengthening them.
- muscles, thus improving your gait and balance and helping you prevent falls.
- whole body by improving your cardiovascular and lung functioning, and your overall fitness.

For best results you should **exercise regularly** 3 to 4 times a week for 30 minutes. You could divide these exercise sessions into 10 or 15 minute increments. If your doctor considers it safe, you can enroll in weight training classes that offer supervision and guidance 2-3 times a week. If you have been diagnosed with osteoporosis or are frail, you could do exercises with low-fall risk, such as swimming, deep-water walking, floor exercises or riding a stationary bike. If you cannot go to a supervised class, you can still do weight/strength exercises at home, or walk for 20-30 minutes, 3-4 times a week.