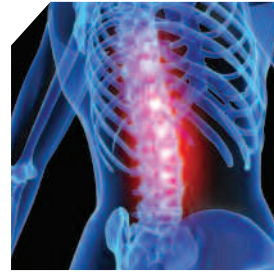


HealthyActions

Achieving Your Goals for Healthy Living



Let's Talk About Osteoporosis

Most people with osteoporosis don't have any symptoms. They find out when they break a bone due to a fall, bump, or strain.²

Bone Health

Osteoporosis (OSS-tee-oh-por-OH-siss) is a disease that makes bones thin and weak.¹ It makes your bones more likely to break.²

Inside your bones it looks like a honeycomb. When you have osteoporosis, the spaces in the honeycomb get larger.² This means that it is easier for those bones to break. The bones that break in people with osteoporosis are usually in the hip, spine, or wrist.¹

A broken bone may not sound that bad. But if you break your hip, you will probably need to have surgery and stay in the hospital.¹ Breaks in the spine can be very painful. They can also prevent you from being active and doing the things you enjoy.

Who Gets Osteoporosis?

Older People

Ten million Americans have osteoporosis.³ Eight million of these are women.³ As you get older, your chances of getting osteoporosis increase.² Your bones get weaker and less dense (less solid).

Women

Women are more likely to get osteoporosis. They lose bone faster than men. This is because of changes that happen in menopause, or the change of life.²

When there is something that causes a person to have a higher chance of getting a disease, it is called a risk factor. Other risk factors for osteoporosis are:

- Your race. White women and Asian women are the most likely to get osteoporosis.⁴
- Early menopause (natural or due to ovaries being surgically removed).⁴
- A family member has broken a bone as an adult.⁴
- A family member has osteoporosis.³
- You have had broken bones as an adult.⁴
- You are a small-boned and thin woman.⁴
- Not getting enough calcium.⁴
- Not getting enough vitamin D.³
- Taking certain drugs for a long time. These include corticosteroids, chemotherapy, and drugs to prevent seizures.³



Let's Talk About Osteoporosis

If you are a woman taking hormones to prevent bone loss, talk to your doctor. Recent studies show hormones might not be a good option for some women.⁷

Steps to Prevent Osteoporosis

Here are some things you can do to prevent osteoporosis:

- Eat more foods that contain calcium⁵:
 - Dairy foods, like low-fat milk, cheese, and yogurt⁶
 - Dark green leafy vegetables²
 - Salmon, tuna, and sardines²
 - Almonds²
- Get more vitamin D by being outdoors and drinking milk with added vitamin D.⁵
- Ask your doctor if you should take calcium or vitamin D supplements.
- Do weight-bearing exercise. Walking, hiking, dancing, and playing tennis are examples.⁵
- Do not smoke.⁵
- Limit alcohol to 1-2 drinks a day.⁴
- If you are a woman, when you turn 65, ask your doctor about getting a special test that tells you how solid your bones are. This test is called a bone density test.²
- If you have osteoporosis, talk to your doctor about drugs that can slow bone loss.

How Can I Find Out If I Have Osteoporosis?

Your doctor may order a “bone density test.” This is a special X-ray that tells how strong your bones are. The test doesn’t require you to do anything special to prepare for it. The test is safe and does not cause pain.²

Can Osteoporosis Be Cured?

Osteoporosis can’t be cured, but it can be treated.² Drugs used to treat osteoporosis slow bone loss and lower your risk of broken bones. Talk with your doctor about taking calcium and vitamin D.

References

1. NOF. Osteoporosis. What Is It? <http://www.nof.org/osteoporosis/index.htm>
2. NIH SeniorHealth. Osteoporosis. <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/osteoporosis/printerFriendly.html?allTopics=entireTopic&images=Include+images&print=Confirm+print+selection>
3. NOF. Fast Facts. <http://www.nof.org/osteoporosis/diseasefacts.htm>
NIH SeniorHealth. Falls and Older Adults.
4. NOF. Prevention: Who's At Risk? <http://www.nof.org/prevention/risk.htm>
5. NOF. Prevention. <http://www.nof.org/prevention/index.htm>
6. NOF. Prevention: Calcium and Vitamin D. <http://www.nof.org/prevention/calcium.htm>
7. MedicineNet.com Osteoporosis: Hormone Therapy. <http://www.medicinenet.com/osteoporosis/page7.htm>



This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your health care provider's instructions. Provided as an educational service by Schering-Plough Managed Markets.