

BONE DENSITY

The Bone Truth on Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a condition where a woman's bones become thin and brittle, breaking easily. These breaks differ from one you might have at an earlier age. These breaks lead to a loss of height and a stooped-over appearance, even to death. The good news is they are often preventable.

Here are some facts that may help you:

** Failure to prevent, diagnose and treat fractures in older women cause more deaths than do breast cancer, heart attack or stroke.

** 25% of women who fracture a hip die from complications within one year.

** 25-50% of women who fracture a hip are no longer able to live alone or take care of themselves any longer. They must move in with family or into a nursing home.

Prevention

1. Recognize your risk (see below).
2. Have a **Bone Density Scan** every two years, beginning at menopause.

Testing

1. DEXA is a special X-ray that measures how thick your bones are (bone mineral density). It is quick and painless.
2. Blood levels will be taken, if needed.
3. We are proud that our own DEXA machine is one of only two in Northwest Alabama that also identifies vertebral fractures. Vertebral fractures cause loss of height, pain and predispose you to other fractures.
4. We will assess what your own personal risk factors are.
5. You will know your results immediately!

Risk Factors

1. Caucasian
2. Fracture of a bone as an adult
3. Small, thin frame
4. Age
5. Low physical activity
6. Excessive alcohol
7. Long-term Prednisone use
8. Low calcium
9. Lack of estrogen

10. Poor eye sight
11. Poor balance
12. Frequent falls
13. Dementia
14. Cigarette smoking
15. Thyroid disorders
16. Low Vitamin D

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