

DECEMBER 2005

Are You At Risk For Osteoporosis?

GET THE FACTS

It is the most common metabolic bone disease in developed countries. Based on the World Health Organization's definition it was estimated that 54% of post-menopausal Caucasian females in the U.S. have Osteopenia (reduction in bone volume to below normal levels especially due to inadequate replacement of bone lost to normal lysis) while 30% have osteoporosis. Men and non-white women who are at risk add to the number significantly; 30 million to 54 million affected individuals in the U.S.

Osteoporosis in men has recently been recognized as an important health problem, as almost 30% of all hip fractures and up to 20% of symptomatic vertebral fractures occur in men.

Osteoporosis is accelerated bone loss. Normally, there is loss of bone mass with aging, perhaps 0.7% per year in adults. The process of bone remodelling from resorption to matrix synthesis to mineralization normally takes about 8 months--a slow but constant process.

Bone in older persons may not be as efficient as bone in younger persons at maintaining itself due to a lifetime of poor lifestyle habits.

KEEPING YOUR BONES STRONG

The most effective way to maintain the strength of your bones requires a combination of lifestyle changes and medical measures.

Lifestyle changes:

- Stop smoking.
- Do weight-bearing exercise, ideally thirty minutes a day, three or more days a week.
- Practice good nutrition, including minimal amounts of animal protein and sufficient calcium intake.
- Prevent falls, since most fractures are preceded by falls.

Vitamin Recommendations:

- Calcium supplements are recommended to most women: 1000–1500 milligrams per day (but check with your doctor first to be sure your calcium level is not too high to begin with).
- Vitamin D supplements (not to exceed 400 I.U. daily) may be recommended if dietary intake is inadequate.

Personal recommendations can be made after a comprehensive Blood Analysis Test. Starting with a blood test and DEXA Scan, we are able to do an in-depth analysis of your total system. We see the problem areas and carefully note major and minor conditions that may lead to serious illness. A nutritional analysis will be able to provide us the information needed in vitamin and lifestyle recommendations.

Call our office to set up a consultation today.

WHAT IS A DEXA BONE DENSITY SCAN?

DEXA bone density testing is the most accurate method available for the diagnosis of osteoporosis. It is also considered an accurate estimator of fracture risk. It will not tell whether you will or will not have a fracture, but gives relative risk of suffering a fracture, just as cholesterol and blood pressure help determine risk for heart disease. A low reading should not cause you to be anxious but may help you set healthy goals. As with other diseases and conditions, early detection is the key to prevention of further bone loss and eventual fractures. DEXA equipment is available at the Back

To Health Center making DEXA bone densitometry testing convenient for our patients.

The DEXA machine sends a thin, invisible beam of low-dose x-rays (equivalent to less than 10 minutes in the sun) with two distinct energy peaks through your bones. One peak is absorbed mainly by soft tissue and the other by bone. The soft tissue amount can be subtracted from the total and what remains is a patient's bone mineral density.

All devices feature special software to compute the data and display them on a computer monitor, allowing your doctor to make an accurate diagnosis.
www.radiologyinfo.com

DO I NEED TO PREPARE FOR THIS EXAM?

On the day of the exam eat normally, but don't take calcium supplements for at least 24 hours beforehand. Inform your Doctor if you recently had a barium examination or have been injected with a contrast material for a computed tomography (CT) scan or radioisotope scan; you may have to wait 10 to 14 days before undergoing a DEXA test. Women should always inform their Doctor if there is a possibility they are pregnant.

There are two different types of DEXA Scans (the central and peripheral devices), the peripheral device in our office only scans your heel making it faster, easier and safer for our patients to have done. You simply place your heel in the device, and within minutes a bone density readout is obtained.

DEXA SCAN RESULTS

The results of a DEXA bone density exam are interpreted by a Doctor who is specially trained to diagnose conditions and diseases by obtaining and interpreting medical images. Your test results will be in the form of two scores:

T score — This number shows the amount of bone you have compared with a young adult of the same gender with peak bone mass. A score above -1 is considered normal. A score between -1 and -2.5 is classified as osteopenia, the first stage of bone loss. A score below -2.5 is defined as osteoporosis. It is used to estimate your risk of developing a fracture.

Z score — This number reflects the amount of bone you have compared with other people in your age group and of the same size and gender. If it is unusually high or low, it may indicate a need for further medical tests.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS vs. RISKS?

Benefits

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Risks

No complications are expected with the DEXA procedure.

Bloodwork is the key to understanding your body's chemistry and is necessary to provide a better picture of your overall health. Diet, Vitamin and Mineral recommendations based upon bloodwork will give a clear indication on strengthening and maintaining healthy bones.

This testing can be done through Primary Care & Chiropractic Center. Please contact us if you have any questions or if you would like to set up a nutritional consultation with Dr. Chad Kesner

Federal Law requires that we warn you of the following:

1. The information provided in this article is for educational purposes only.
2. Your individual health status and any required health care treatments can only be properly addressed by a professional healthcare provider of your choice. Remember: There is no adequate substitution for a personal consultation with your chosen health care provider. Therefore, we encourage you to make your own health care decisions based upon your research and in partnership with a qualified health care professional.