



Fragility Fractures



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
UPPER CHESAPEAKE HEALTH



Fragility Fracture

A fragility fracture is a broken bone resulting from any fall from a standing height or less. In most cases, our bodies are built to handle a fall from this height without a broken bone unless there is an issue that causes the bone to be weak. The most common areas for breaks include the hip, spine and wrist. Adults who have had any type of broken bone are at an increased risk for additional breaks or fractures.

In the case of fragility fractures, osteoporosis is the most common condition causing the weak bone. On average, 1.5 million fragility fractures occur each year in the U.S. and osteoporosis is the most common reason for the weak bones.

Because most people are not screened for osteoporosis, the risk of fragility fractures increases. If you have been diagnosed with osteoporosis, it is extremely important that you follow up with your primary care physician or a provider that specializes in treating osteoporosis.

Common Fracture Sites



Hip



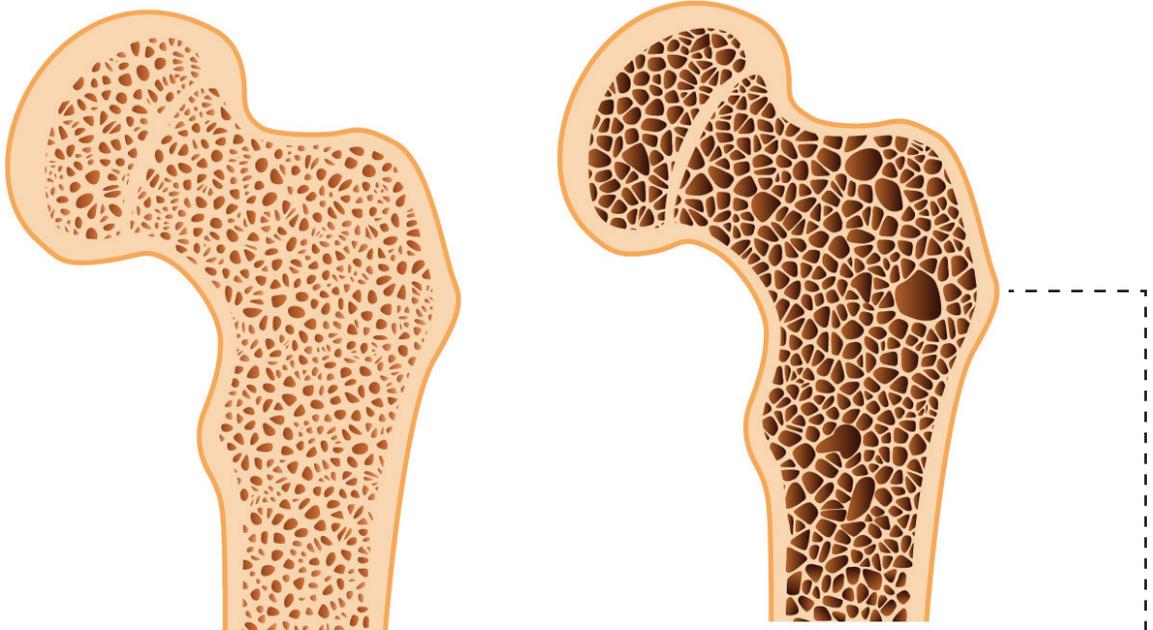
Wrist



Spine

What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a condition that causes bones to become weaker making fractures more likely. It occurs when you lose bone density, when your body doesn't produce enough bone, or both. Although bone loss is a natural part of aging, not everyone will develop osteoporosis. However, your risk increases as you get older. About nine million people in the U.S. over the age of 50 have osteoporosis, and about half of women and two in five men will develop it at some point in their lifetime. Because you can't feel your bones weakening, osteoporosis is often called a 'silent disease.'



Normal Bone

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is the underlying cause of approximately two million fractures every year.



What Causes Osteoporosis?

Many risk factors can lead to bone loss and osteoporosis. Some of these things you can help prevent, but many you cannot.

Risk factors you can't change include:

- Gender; women are more likely to develop osteoporosis
- Age; the older you are, the greater your risk
- Body size; small, thin women are at greater risk
- Ethnicity; white and Asian women are at the highest risk, while black and Hispanic women have a lower risk
- Family history; osteoporosis often runs in families

Risk factors you CAN change include:

- Estrogen deficiencies
- Increase your calcium and vitamin D intake by eating a healthy diet rich in these nutrients and with supplements
- Increase your activity level; lack of exercise can cause weak bones
- Stop smoking/tobacco use and limit alcohol consumption
- Limit coffee, colas or other caffeinated beverages

Be aware of your risk factors, take action and change the behaviors you have control over. Talk with your physician or the Joint Center team if you have questions.



LOW
CALCIUM



LACK OF
EXERCISE



FAMILY
HISTORY



GENDER



ETHNICITY



EXCESSIVE
ALCOHOL



SMOKING

How is Osteoporosis Diagnosed?

Your physician or health care provider will review your personal and family medical history and conduct a physical exam.

Other tests may include:

- Blood and urine tests for calcium, Vitamin D and hormone levels
- X-rays and cat scans can show broken or fractured bones
- Dexa scans (bone density tests) can diagnose osteoporosis before a broken or fractured bone occurs

A Dexa scan is painless, takes less than 15 minutes and measures the density of the minerals, like calcium, in your bones. It can also diagnose bone loss, osteoporosis, predict risk of future bone fractures and determine how well osteoporosis medication is working.



Dexa Scan



You Can Make Your Bones Healthier!

Eating a well-balanced diet rich in calcium and Vitamin D can help make your bones healthier and stronger.

Good sources of calcium include:

- Low-fat dairy products, including milk, cheese and yogurt
- Dark green, leafy vegetables such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, spinach and kale
- Sardines and salmon
- Nuts
- Foods and drinks with added calcium

Good sources of Vitamin D include:

- Sunshine (remember to protect your skin with sunscreen)
- Saltwater fish such as salmon, halibut, tuna and shrimp
- Foods and drinks with added Vitamin D

Good Sources of Calcium

Good Sources of Vitamin D



LOW-FAT
DAIRY



DARK GREEN
LEAFY
VEGGIES



SARDINES
& SALMON



FOOD/DRINK
WITH ADDED
CALCIUM &
VITAMIN D



SUNSHINE



SALTWATER
FISH

Exercise

It's no secret that exercise can help make your bones stronger. It's always best to check with your doctor before beginning, or increasing, an exercise plan. The best exercises for strengthening your bones are weight-bearing ones such as walking and lifting hand weights. Consult your doctor, start slow and increase your activity as you are able.





A Healthy Lifestyle for Strong Bones

Tobacco

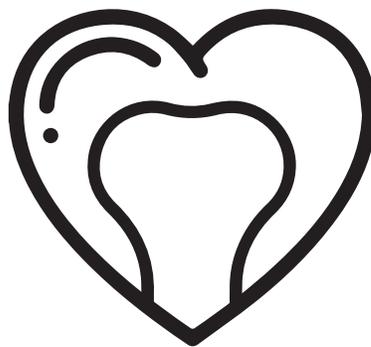
Smoking and using tobacco is bad for your overall health, including the health of your bones. It can slow the healing of a fractured or broken bone, AND increases bone loss. It also decreases estrogen in a women's body which affects how well your body absorbs and uses calcium.

Alcohol

Avoid excessive alcohol, as consuming more than one alcoholic drink a day may decrease bone density and your body's ability to absorb calcium. Excessive alcohol can also increase your risk for falls.



No Smoking



**Love Your
Bones**



**No Excessive
Alcohol Use**

Environmental Factors

At any age, there are changes people can make within their environment that can reduce the risk of falling and fractures.

Consider these ideas for keeping the inside of your house safe:

- Keep rooms free of clutter
- Use carpet runners on slippery floors
- Be sure carpets and area rugs have skid-proof backs
- Wear low-heeled shoes with good support
- Do not walk in just stockings or socks
- Install handrails on both sides of stairs
- Use good lighting in stairways and in paths to the bathroom
- Install grab bars for bathroom walls near tub, shower and toilet
- Use non-slip bath mats
- Keep a flashlight next to the bed
- When using a stepstool, always choose one with handrails for stability
- Keep your cordless or cell phone within reach in case you need to call for help
- Update your glasses to be sure your vision is good
- ADD MORE LIGHTS INSIDE YOUR HOME

Consider these ideas for keeping the outside of your house safe:

- Use a cane or walker if your balance is poor
- Wear rubber-soled shoes so you don't slip
- Walk on the grass when sidewalks may be slippery
- In the winter, put salt or kitty litter on sidewalks and other walkways





Questions to Ask Your Doctor

- Should I have a bone density test? How often should I get one?
- I am post-menopausal, am I at a greater risk for developing osteoporosis?
- How can I be sure I'm getting enough calcium and Vitamin D?
- Is it safe for me to exercise? What kinds of exercises are best for me?
- Are there other lifestyle changes I can make to decrease my risk of osteoporosis?
- Will I need to take medication to prevent bone loss?
- Could these medications interact with the other medicines I'm taking?

Questions? Please call:



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