

HEALTH EDUCATION
LIBRARY FOR PEOPLE



World's largest FREE health Education library for people..

We help patients to become better patients! We can help you understand your health and medical problems better so you can get better care in partnership with your Doctor.

OUR VISION

We think patients are the largest untapped healthcare resource and that Information therapy is the most Powerful Medicine !

OUR GOALS

1. Encouraging health insurance companies to invest in patient education.
2. Advocating information therapy.
3. Setting up a national network of patient education centers.
4. Developing patient educational materials in Indian Languages for the web.

For more information on this subject:
Ask the Librarian : Free Answers to any Health Questions !!

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For More Info: ASK A LIBRARIAN



Health Education Library For People

206,Dr.D.N.Road,
National Insurance Bldg.,
Ground Floor,
Near New Excelsior Cinema,
Mumbai – 400 001.

Tel:22061101,22031133, 65952393,65952394

Email: helplibrary@gmail.com

www.healthlibrary.com



HEALTH EDUCATION LIBRARY FOR PEOPLE

Osteoporosis



Understanding Osteoporosis

**LET'S HELP
ERADICATE
IGNORANCE**

What Is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a disease that thins and weakens the bones to the point that they become fragile and break easily. Women and men with osteoporosis most often break bones in the hip, spine, and wrist, but any bone can be affected. You can't "catch" osteoporosis or give it to someone else.

Bone is living tissue. Throughout our lives, the body breaks down old bone and replaces it with new bone. But as people age, more bone is broken down than is replaced.

Risk factors include

- Getting older
- Being small and thin
- Having a family history of osteoporosis
- Taking certain medicines
- Being a white or Asian woman
- Having osteopenia, which is low bone mass

Risk Factors

There are no symptoms of osteoporosis until a fracture occurs. That is why it is often called "silent." Certain factors can put you at risk for developing osteoporosis, but there are also steps you can take to prevent it.

Prevention

Fortunately, in your older years, you can still take steps to protect your bones. You'll

need a balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D, a regular exercise program, and, in some cases, medication. These steps can help you slow bone loss. In addition, you'll want to learn how to fall-proof your home and change your lifestyle to avoid fracturing fragile bones.



Detection

Your doctor may recommend that you have your bone mass measured. A bone mineral density (BMD) test is the best way to determine your bone health. BMD tests can identify osteoporosis, determine your



risk for fractures (broken bones), and measure your response to osteoporosis treatment. The most widely recognized

BMD test is a dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry, or DXA test. It is painless—a bit like having an x ray, but with much less exposure to radiation. It can measure bone density at your hip and spine. BMD tests can:

- Detect low bone density before a fracture occurs.
- Confirm a diagnosis of osteoporosis if you already have one or more fractures.
- Predict your chances of fracturing in the future.
- Determine your rate of bone loss, and monitor the effects of treatment if the test is conducted at intervals of a year or more.

Treatment

A comprehensive osteoporosis treatment program includes a focus on proper nutrition, exercise, and safety issues to prevent falls that may result in fractures. In addition, your doctor may prescribe a medication to slow or stop bone loss, increase bone density, and reduce fracture risk.

Nutrition: The foods we eat contain a variety of vitamins, minerals, and other important nutrients that help keep our bodies healthy. All of these nutrients are needed in balanced proportion. In particular, calcium and vitamin D are needed for strong bones and for your heart, muscles, and nerves to function properly. (See "Prevention" section for recommended amount of calcium.)

Exercise: Exercise is an important component of an osteoporosis prevention and treatment program. Exercise not only improves your bone health, but it increases muscle strength, coordination, and balance, and leads to better overall health. Although exercise is good for someone with osteoporosis, it should not put any sudden or excessive strain on your bones. As extra insurance against fractures, your doctor can recommend specific exercises to strengthen and support your back.

Therapeutic Medications:

Several medications are available for the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis with consultation with your doctor.

