

Osteoporosis, which means porous bone, is a disease characterized by low bone mass. It causes bones to become fragile and increasingly susceptible to fractures, particularly of the spine, hip, and wrist. Currently in the United States, an estimated 10 million people suffer from osteoporosis, and nearly 34 million people have low bone mass and are considered to be at increased risk for the disease as a result. *Of the 44 million Americans affected by osteoporosis, 80 percent are women.* The National Osteoporosis Foundation reports that approximately one in two women and up to one in four men will have an osteoporosis-related fracture in their remaining lifetime.



Prevent Osteoporosis

Although approximately 85-90 percent of bone mass is built during childhood and adolescence, there are steps adults can take to help prevent osteoporosis. Consider the following suggestions from the National Osteoporosis Foundation to optimize bone health.

- Get the daily recommended amounts of calcium and vitamin D.
- Engage in regular weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercise.
- Avoid smoking and excessive alcohol.
- Talk to your health-care provider about your chance of getting osteoporosis and ask when you should have a bone density test.
- Take osteoporosis medication when appropriate.



Bone Up -ON- Osteoporosis



Risk Factors

A person should consult with his or her physician to identify risk factors and to determine a plan to protect bone health. Risk factors for osteoporosis include the following.

- Being female
- Aging
- Menopause
- A family history of osteoporosis
- Low body weight/being small and thin
- Low intake of calcium and/or vitamin D
- Not eating enough fruits and vegetables
- Sedentary lifestyle



Early Detection

A bone density test can measure bone density in various areas of the body, detect osteoporosis before a fracture occurs, predict the likelihood of future fractures, and determine the rate of bone loss. The National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends bone density testing of the hip and spine by a central DXA (dual energy x-ray absorptiometry) machine to diagnose osteoporosis.

To determine when bone density testing is right for you, consult a physician.



The Bare Bones about Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a disease that causes bones to become brittle, less dense, and increasingly susceptible to fractures. Fortunately, osteoporosis is a preventable and treatable disease.



To schedule a bone density test, have your doctor refer you to the RMC Breast Health Center at (803) 395-2841.



+rmc
the Regional Medical Center