

<i>Client:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Clinician:</i>	

What Is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a disease that weakens the bones. Weakened bones are more likely to fracture (break). Osteoporosis affects men and women, but postmenopausal women are most at risk. To help prevent osteoporosis, you need to exercise and nourish your bones throughout your life. If you have osteoporosis, you can do a lot to reduce its effect on your life. Knowing how to prevent fractures and spinal curvature can help you live more comfortably and safely with this disease.

Reducing Your Risk of Fractures

The most common fracture sites in people with osteoporosis are the wrist, spine, and hip. These fractures are often caused by accidents and falls. All fractures are painful and may limit what you can do. But hip fractures are very serious. They require surgery, and it can take months to recover. To reduce your risk of fractures:

- Get regular exercise. Try walking, swimming, or weight training.
- Eat foods that are rich in calcium, or take calcium supplements.
- Make your home safe to avoid accidents.

Understanding Spinal Fractures

Your spine is made up of many bones called vertebrae. Osteoporosis can cause the vertebrae in your spine to collapse. As a result, your upper back may arch forward, creating a curvature. Spine fractures may also result from back strain and bad posture. You will also lose height. Your lower spine must then adjust to keep your body balanced. This can cause back pain. To prevent or lessen these spinal changes:

- Practice good posture.
- Use proper techniques if you need to lift heavy objects
- Do back exercises to help your posture.
- Lie on your back when you have pain.

Publication Source: Larsen PR, Williams Textbook of Endocrinology, 10th ed., Prevention and therapy, 2003, pp 1391

Publication Source: Rosen C, Cecil Medicine, 23rd ed., Osteoporosis, Chapter 264, 2007, pp 1879-1888

Publication Source: Slovic DM, Essentials of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 1st ed., Osteoporosis, Chapter 122, 2002, pp 648-649

Online Source: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons

[http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/fact/thr_report.cfm?Thread_ID=388&topcategory=Osteoporosis&all=all]

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Contact the on-call nurse if you are experiencing any change in your current health condition.

For ALL emergencies requiring IMMEDIATE medical attention, call 911.

Teachingsheet-osteoporosis/09-09