



### Are **You** at Risk?

Women and men of any age and race can develop osteoporosis, but certain factors increase your risk. *You may be at risk for osteoporosis if you:*

- Are a woman who has gone through menopause
- Are over age 50
- Have a history of bone fracture
- Are thin or have a small-framed build
- Have a family history of osteoporosis
- Get fewer than three dairy servings a day
- Have a diet low in vitamin D
- Are a smoker
- Drink alcohol heavily
- Have an inactive lifestyle
- Use certain medications that affect bones
- Are Caucasian or Asian (though African Americans and Hispanic Americans are at significant risk as well)



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2021 K Street, NW, Suite 305  
Washington, DC 20006  
T 202.293.2856  
F 202.785.8574

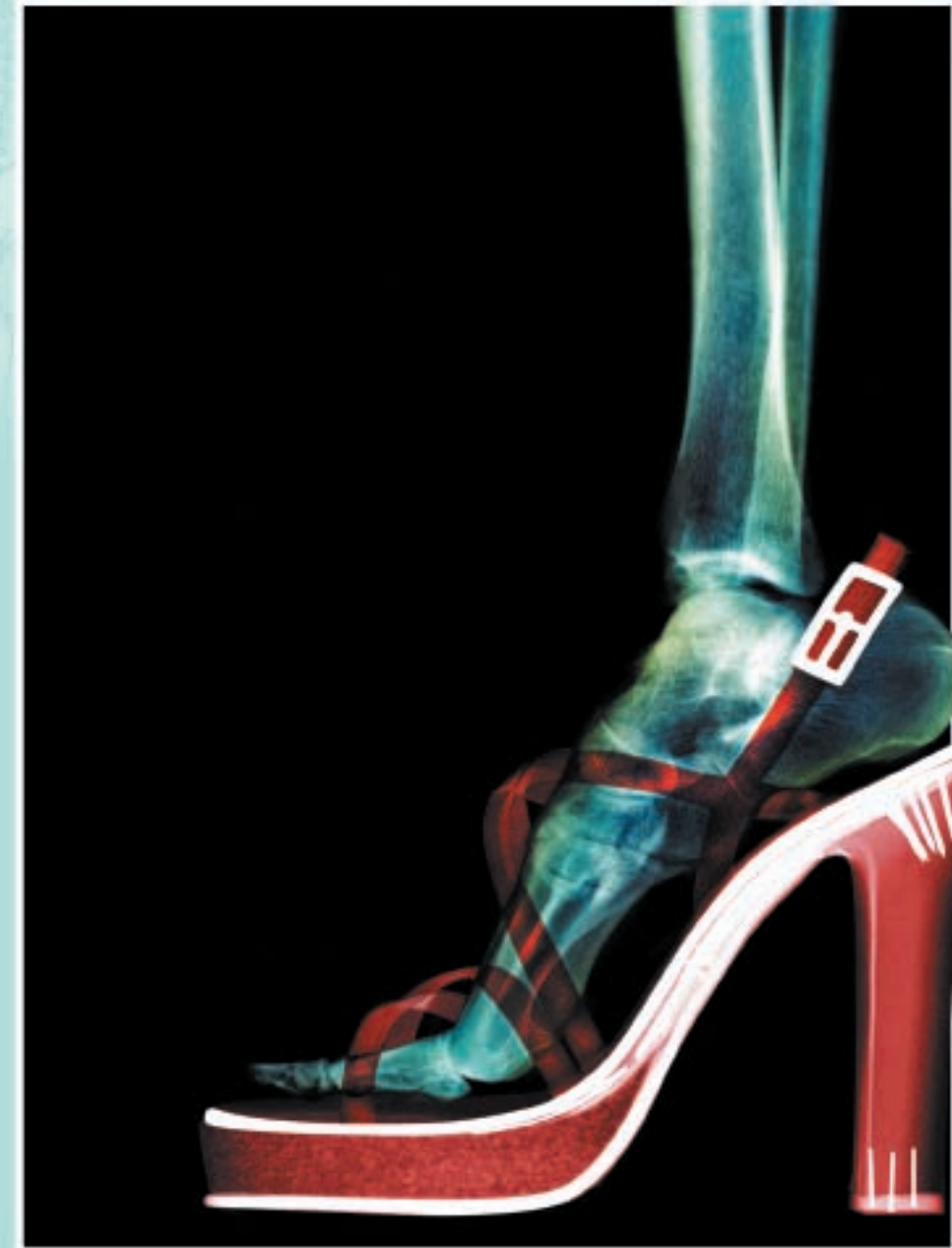
[www.agingresearch.org](http://www.agingresearch.org)

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*Preventing and Treating Osteoporosis*

# Standing Strong



## Arm Yourself Against Osteoporosis



STANDING STRONG

**As a woman, you lead an active life**—raising a family, managing a household, pursuing a career. Your activities may change over time, but the importance of leading an active, independent life remains the same. Whether you're busy with work and volunteer responsibilities or looking forward to enjoying more leisure time, you want to stay healthy, strong, and independent.

A woman's risk of hip fracture from osteoporosis is equivalent to her combined risk of developing breast, uterine and ovarian cancer.

Believe it or not, osteoporosis—deterioration of bone tissue and bone mass—is one of the greatest health threats for women over 50. Because osteoporosis develops without obvious symptoms, many people don't realize how serious this condition really is.

One in every three American women will experience a spinal fracture due to osteoporosis, and one in six will fracture her hip. These fractures are serious business, because they can limit your independence and activity level for years to come.

**You can arm yourself against osteoporosis.**

By learning as much as you can about the condition, taking preventive measures, and talking with your health care provider about treatments, you can protect your bone health and maintain your independence.



## Stay Strong through Prevention

Women can lose up to 20% of their bone mass in the five to seven years following menopause, making them more susceptible to osteoporosis.

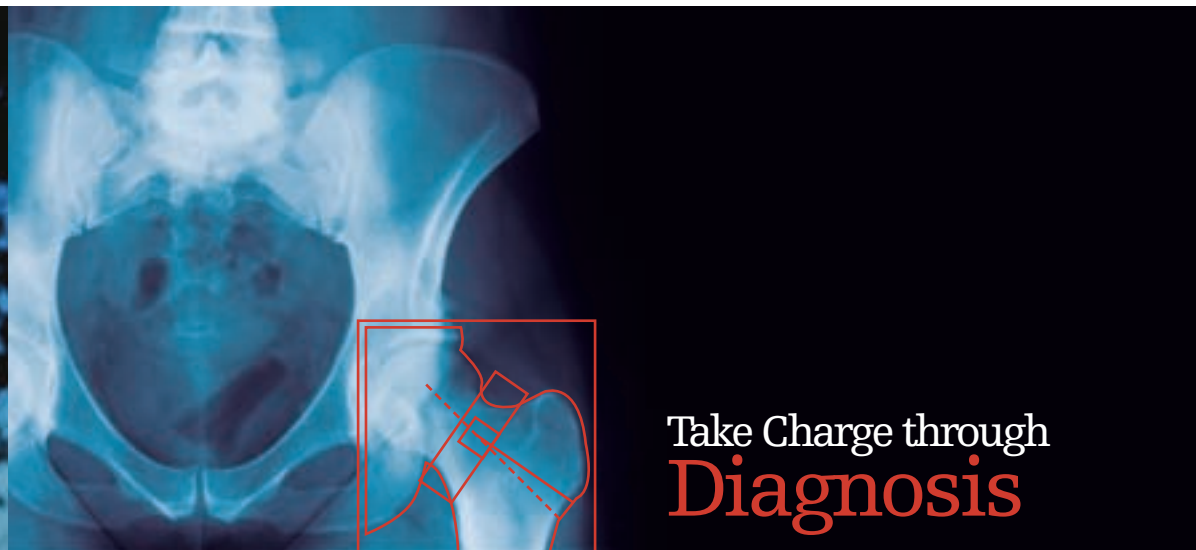
Source: National Osteoporosis Foundation

**Osteoporosis is a silent disease.** It progresses slowly over time, without symptoms. The first indication that you have osteoporosis may be a bone fracture.

If you're at risk, you can take steps now to prevent bone loss. Even if you already have osteoporosis, it's not too late to take steps to maintain the health of your bones.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends five steps to protecting your bones:

1. Get your daily recommended amounts of calcium and vitamin D
2. Engage in regular weight-bearing exercise
3. Avoid smoking and excessive alcohol
4. Talk to your health care provider about bone health
5. When appropriate, get a bone density test and take medication



## Take Charge through Diagnosis

### SHOULD YOU HAVE A BONE DENSITY TEST?

The National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends a bone density test for:

- All women aged 65 and older regardless of risk factors
- Younger post-menopausal women with one or more risk factors
- Post-menopausal women with existing bone fractures

After you've had an initial bone density test, be sure to ask your health care provider about periodic follow-ups.

**The best way to determine whether you are at risk for osteoporosis is through a bone density test.** A bone density test is painless and safe and, in many cases, is covered by Medicare.

Health care providers use one of several types of machines to measure bone density. **All of them are noninvasive.** In many cases, you don't even have to change into an examination gown.

The information from a bone density test allows your health care provider to determine whether you are at risk for fracture. In general, the lower your bone density, the higher your risk for fracture. Test results will help you and your provider decide the best course of action to help your bones stay healthy.

50 percent of women will have a fracture after the age of 50 due to fragile bones. Find out whether you are at risk.



## Fight Back through Treatment



### COMMON OSTEOPOROSIS TREATMENTS

The Food and Drug Administration has approved three categories of drugs for treatment of osteoporosis:

- Bisphosphonates (new once-a-year intravenous treatments are now available)
- Calcitonin
- Parathyroid Hormone
- Selective Estrogen Receptor Modulators (SERMs)

New treatments are under investigation that may prove to increase bone production and reduce bone loss.

To learn more about osteoporosis treatment options, consult the resources listed at the end of this brochure and your health care provider.

**There is no cure for osteoporosis.** Prevention is still the most effective weapon against bone loss.

Certain kinds of medications, however, can help treat osteoporosis by slowing bone loss and building new bone.

You can safeguard your active lifestyle if you take it upon yourself to make it happen:

- Make simple changes in your lifestyle to promote bone health
- Work with your health care provider to identify an appropriate treatment
- Stick to your treatment, even if it doesn't seem like the medication is making a difference. Your health care provider will be able to tell whether it has helped through further testing.

See the **Action Checklist** at the end of this brochure for a checklist of things you can do to take charge of your bone health.



## Stand Strong with Information

**You can take charge of your bone health** by learning as much as you can about osteoporosis prevention and treatment and advocating for yourself with your health care provider.

### Helpful resources for learning more include:

**Alliance for Aging Research**  
[www.agingresearch.org](http://www.agingresearch.org)  
(202) 293-2856

**National Osteoporosis Foundation**  
[www.nof.org](http://www.nof.org)  
(202) 223-2226

**Foundation for Osteoporosis Research and Education (FORE)**  
[www.fore.org](http://www.fore.org)  
(888) 266-3015

**International Osteoporosis Foundation**  
[www.iofbonehealth.org](http://www.iofbonehealth.org)

**National Women's Health Information Center**  
[www.4women.gov](http://www.4women.gov)

**Cedars-Sinai Hospital**  
[www.cedars-sinai.edu](http://www.cedars-sinai.edu)

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
[www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/bonehealth/content.html](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/bonehealth/content.html)

**WebMD**  
[www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/default.htm](http://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/default.htm)

You are the best advocate for your own health. Take a look at the checklist below to make sure you are doing everything you can to manage your risk from osteoporosis.

### Action Checklist

- Assess your osteoporosis risk.
- Take calcium and vitamin D to promote healthy bones.
- Exercise regularly.
- Avoid smoking and excessive alcohol.
- Get a bone density test.
- Take the osteoporosis medication prescribed by your health care provider.
- Stick to your treatment plan, even if it doesn't seem like the medication is doing anything. Realize that osteoporosis medications work without your feeling any difference in your bones.
- Talk to your health care provider if you believe the treatment prescribed is not for you.
- Stay aware of new treatments. Talk to your health care provider about treatment options at every visit and check out online resources to keep up to date on the latest advances in osteoporosis medicine.