



QUESTIONS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ANSWERS

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis (say: os-te-o-po-ro-sis) is a disease that makes the bones thin. Thin bones are weak. Simple bumps or strains can cause weak bones to break. Osteoporosis can affect bones in any part of the body. The most common breaks are in the:

- Spine (back bone)
- Hip
- Pelvis
- Wrist
- Upper arm

Risks for Osteoporosis

The things that put you at risk for osteoporosis are your:

1. Gender (sex)
2. Age
3. Race
4. Body type
5. Health problems
6. Health habits

1. **Gender:** (sex) Osteoporosis is most common in women.
2. **Age:** It is most common in women over age 50. One in 2 women over age 50 is at risk for osteoporosis. So are 1 in 4 men over age 50. Women as young as 25 can begin to have bone loss.
3. **Race:** Osteoporosis is most common in white and Asian women.
4. **Body type:** Women with a thin frame are most at risk for osteoporosis. Women who have lost height may have osteoporosis.

5. **Health problems:** Problems that put people at greater risk include:
- A family history of osteoporosis
 - On-going health problems such as
 - kidney failure
 - liver disease
 - eating disorders
 - Not being able to be active for long periods
 - Taking certain medicines
 - Talk to your doctor to see if your medicines affect osteoporosis.
6. **Health habits**
- Eating a diet low in calcium
 - Low vitamin D levels
 - Lack of exercise
 - Smoking
 - Drinking too much alcohol

How to Tell If You Have Osteoporosis

The only way to tell if you have osteoporosis is to have a mineral bone density (MBD) test. This is a simple, painless test that uses a kind of X-ray. If you are at risk for osteoporosis, you should have this test. Bone loss happens over time. There are no signs until the disease is advanced. The sooner you find out if you have osteoporosis the sooner you can treat it.

Treatment

The goal of treatment is to stop more bone loss. There are many safe treatments that work well. They include taking:

- Medicines
- Vitamin D and Calcium
- Exercise programs

Talk to your doctor about the best treatment for you.

How to Prevent Osteoporosis

- Eat a balanced diet.
- Get the right amount of the mineral calcium and vitamin D.
- Spend more than 20 minutes a day in the sun. You get vitamin D from the sun.

- Limit your intake of caffeine. Caffeine is in coffee, tea and many soft drinks.
- Limit your use of alcohol.
- Quit smoking.
- Get regular exercise. Check with your doctor about the right kind and amount of exercise for you.

For More Information Contact:

National Osteoporosis Foundation

1232 22nd Street, N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20037-1292
www.nof.org
 202-223-2226
 1-800-231-4222

**National Institutes of Health
 Osteoporosis & Related Bone Disease**

2 AMS Circle
 Bethesda, MD 20892-3676
www.osteoporosis.nih.gov
 1-800-624-2663

How can I find a Doctor?

St. Vincent Charity Hospital has doctors who have special training in osteoporosis. To contact one of our doctors call the:

Physician Referral Line at 1-800-223-8662
 Visit our Web site at www.stvincentcharity.com

Our doctors serve with a deep respect for all. Their goal is to give the best care and education whether or not a person can pay.

St. Vincent Charity Hospital
 2351 E. 22nd Street
 Cleveland, Ohio 44115
 216-861-6200
 TTY: Ohio Relay 1-800-750-0750

St. Luke's Health Care Center
 11201 Shaker Boulevard
 Cleveland, Ohio 44104
 216-721-6900

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