MEN AND OSTEOPOROSIS

osteoporosis australia

MEN GET OSTEOPOROSIS TOO!

HOW STRONG ARE YOUR BONES?

osteoporosis australia

National tollfree number

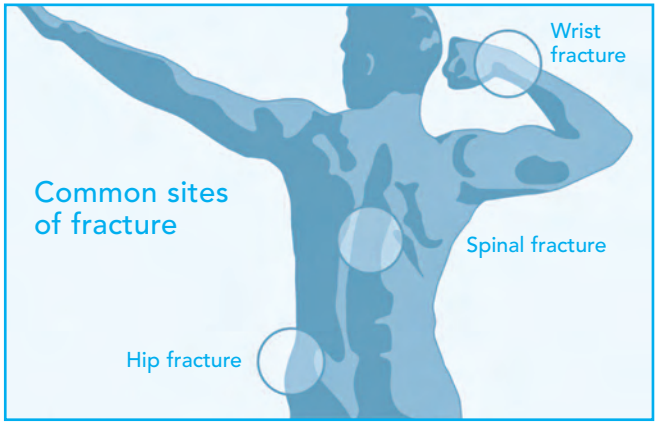
1800 242 141

www.osteoporosis.org.au

The Australian Government has provided funding to support this project.

About osteoporosis

- One in three men in Australia over the age of sixty will suffer a fracture due to osteoporosis.
- Osteoporosis is a condition where bones become weakened and fracture more easily than normal bone. Even a minor bump (or fall) can cause serious fractures.



- Any bone can be affected by osteoporosis but the most common fracture sites are the spine, hip, wrist, ribs and arm.
- There are usually no signs or symptoms of osteoporosis until a fracture occurs.
- Bone mass generally begins to fall after about the age of 30, although it falls more gradually in men than women and men generally have more bone mass than women.
- As men get older, bones begin to lose calcium and can become weaker. Also, people aged over 65 cannot absorb calcium from food as well as in younger years.
- Testosterone, the male sex hormone, is important for maintaining bone mass. In some men, low testosterone levels may cause bone thinning, a decrease of muscle mass and increase the bone turnover rate so bone becomes less solid. Men with clinically confirmed low testosterone levels (testosterone deficiency) are more likely to have bone fractures.
- Other medical conditions can cause an increased risk of osteoporosis (see risk factors).

RISK FACTORS FOR OSTEOPOROSIS IN MEN

1. Your Family History

- any family history of osteoporosis and fractures

2. Your Medical History

Certain conditions and medications can increase your risk of osteoporosis:

- previous fracture from a minor bump or fall (over 50 years of age)
- being underweight
- rheumatoid arthritis
- over-active thyroid or parathyroid glands
- coeliac disease and other chronic gut conditions
- chronic liver or kidney disease
- low testosterone levels resulting in for example impotence, lack of libido
- corticosteroids (used for asthma, arthritis and kidney disease)
- anticonvulsants (used to treat epilepsy and some psychiatric disorders)
- certain cancer treatments

3. Lifestyle factors that may increase bone loss rate

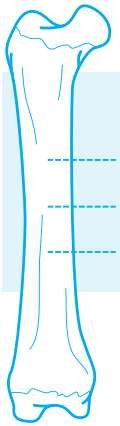
- sedentary lifestyle over many years
- smoking
- excessive alcohol use
- low calcium intake
- vitamin D deficiency

Can osteoporosis be prevented?

A healthy lifestyle which is also important for bone health and may help men reduce their risk of osteoporosis includes: not smoking, limiting alcohol intake, exercising, getting enough daily calcium (eg: three serves of dairy products a day) to provide around 1000mg of calcium and adequate daily vitamin D.

Diagnosis

Osteoporosis is diagnosed based on a man's medical history, measuring loss of height and tests such as a bone density test (DXA: dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry). A bone density test is a simple scan that will give you a T-score. The result will be in the range of: normal; osteopenia (low bone density); or osteoporosis.



T-score:

Normal: Higher than -1

Osteopenia: Between -1 and -2.5

Osteoporosis: -2.5 or lower

A man who has a T-score of -2.5 or lower has osteoporosis and is at high risk of getting a bone fracture. If a man has this score after having a bone density test, then he should talk to his doctor about treatment for osteoporosis and discuss lifestyle changes to improve bone density.

A score between -1.0 and -2.5 shows osteopenia or low bone density. Your doctor may recommend lifestyle changes to reduce the risk of developing further bone loss and/or the risk of fracture.

If osteoporosis is diagnosed early and effective treatments are used, bone loss can be prevented from getting worse.

Treatment

- The most common medication used to treat osteoporosis in men to prevent further bone loss and reduce fracture risk is a bisphosphonate. It is taken orally or by intravenous injection. Another drug, teriparatide (parathyroid hormone) helps new bone to grow and increases bone mass, and is given by daily injections.
- Men with symptoms of testosterone deficiency and low testosterone levels can improve their bone density with testosterone replacement. It is treated by giving doses of testosterone to bring the blood levels back up to normal either by injections, implants, skin patches, oral capsules, gels and creams.