

Orthopaedic Connection

Osteoporosis Affects Men Too

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Many of my male patients of middle age or beyond are very surprised when I tell them they have osteoporosis. They think osteoporosis is a woman's disease. Well, here are the facts:

- 20% of all men over 50 will have an osteoporotic fracture.
- 20% of hip fractures are in men.
- More men than women die in the first year after a major fracture. Gulp! Were you aware of this?

Men's Risk Factors

Osteoporosis in men can result from a secondary cause or combination of causes. It's a pretty long list.

- Low testosterone
- Hyperparathyroidism
- Excess Calcium excretion in urine
- Diabetes
- Hyperthyroid
- Chronic liver disease
- Many medications
- Excess alcohol intake
- Low Calcium and Vitamin D intake
- Smoking
- No exercise

What To Do

If you are a man over 50 and have had any fracture, you need testing. If you are over 50 and have one or more risk factors, you also need testing even if you have not had a fracture.

This is what the National Osteoporosis Guidelines tell us.

In addition, all men over 70 need testing, even if you think you are healthy as a horse!

Testing For Osteoporosis

You need to have a DXA scan (dual x-ray absorptiometry), commonly called by most patients "a bone density test". By the way, don't call it a bone scan, because that is a test that is totally different.

The DXA scan gives me measurements known as T-scores. Different numbers signify either no problem or possibly low bone mass of varying degree.

I'm not going to give you all the numbers because it is my job to deal with that and I don't want to get too technical and lose you.

This is taking longer than I thought so this is a good place to stop this week. There is much more to tell you. Please return next week for the very important conclusion. See you then.

I sincerely hope all of our loyal readers will take advantage of an endless amount of musculoskeletal information. It is easy! Log onto www.orthopodsurgeon.com.

It gives access to all Website articles, Your Orthopaedic Connection and every GCH article from most recent to the first. Full text! It covers everything I do in the office and hospital.

Good Health. Good life. All the best to you.

Dr. Haverbush