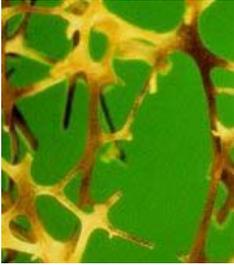


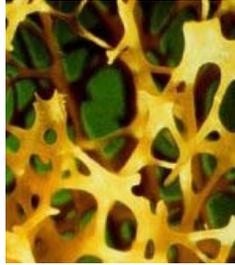
What is osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is commonly known as brittle bone disease. It is a degenerative disease that causes thinning of the bone which can lead to frailty, fractures (most often in the hip or spine), a curved back and loss of height. If left untreated, osteoporosis can become one of the major causes of suffering, disability and death in the elderly.

Is it preventable and treatable?



Osteoporotic bone



Normal bone

Many people with osteoporosis are unaware that they have the condition. It is known as the 'silent epidemic' because it doesn't produce any symptoms until a fracture occurs.

The silent epidemic

- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 12 men will develop osteoporosis during their lifetime.
- There are over 200,000 fractures caused by osteoporosis each year in the UK: a broken bone every 3 minutes.
- More women die after hip fractures than from cancer of the ovaries, cervix and uterus.
- Osteoporosis costs the NHS over £940 million each year.
- Osteoporosis is increasing by 10% each year.

Who does it affect?

Although osteoporosis is more common in elderly women it can also affect men and can occur at any age. However, there are certain indicators which can help doctors identify those at risk.

Who's at risk?

Women

- *Women are at greater risk of osteoporosis due to rapidly declining levels of oestrogen after the menopause*
- *Early menopause (before 45)*
- *Early hysterectomy - especially if one or both ovaries were removed*
- *Infrequent periods - often linked to over-dieting (especially anorexia) or over exercising*

Men

- *Testosterone deficiency*

Men & Women

- *Family history of osteoporosis*
- *Chronic intestinal disorders*
- *Sedentary lifestyle*
- *Long term steroid treatment for disease*
- *Thyroid disease*
- *Cigarette smoker or excessive alcohol intake*
- *Milk intolerant or low calcium intake*
- *Thin or small framed.*

How can it be prevented?

All men and women who are at risk of developing osteoporosis should take action to protect their skeleton. It is important to have a balanced diet with adequate intake of calcium and vitamin D. People who are unable to eat dairy products should boost their intake with supplements. Maintaining an active lifestyle is good for bone health, regular weight-bearing exercise such as brisk walking or jogging helps to increase bone mass. Stopping smoking and reducing alcohol intake to a moderate level (14 units a week for women and 21 units a week for men) helps to reduce bone loss.

Early detection enables doctors to treat the disease and prevent further bone loss.

There are two main methods of measuring bone density:

X-ray based methods usually take a bone density measurement by scanning the hip, spine, forearm or heel.

Ultrasound bone sonometers estimate the bone density of the heel.

Why choose Ultrasound?

- Ultrasound is safe, radiation free technology
- It is quick, non-invasive and painless
- The heel bone contains a high percentage of the kind of bone most affected by osteoporosis and so gives accurate results.
- Using a portable sonometer, an osteoporosis test is cheaper than X-Ray based methods.
- The compactness of the portable sonometer means it is easily transportable and will allow a test to be completed practically anywhere.
- Put your min at rest - be screened now

The Test Procedure

To perform the test the patient is seated and a foot is placed in the ultrasound machine. Ultrasound waves are passed through the heel and the bone density is estimated by the characteristics of the transmitted waves. It involves no injections or invasive procedures. The entire procedure takes about 1 minute and there is no need to wait for the results because the unit immediately processes the results and prints them out. Medical advice will then be offered on prevention or treatment as necessary.