

# Women's Health



## Nine Bone-Chilling Facts About Osteoporosis

(NAPSA)—No bones about it, osteoporosis—bone loss—is a serious disease, though, fortunately, testing and treatments are available so you can protect yourself and those you care about.

### The Facts And Stats

To help you handle the condition, there are a few facts you should know:

1. Fifty-four million Americans have low bone density or osteoporosis.

2. One in two women can expect to develop osteoporosis at some time in their lives.

3. Sixty thousand deaths annually are due to complications from osteoporosis.

4. Every year, 300,000 hip fractures occur and 20 percent of those impacted die within a year, while half never regain their independence.

5. More U.S. women die each year from complications of hip fracture than from breast cancer. In fact, a woman's lifetime risk of hip fracture equals her combined risk of breast, uterine and ovarian cancers.

6. Sixty percent of women 50-plus have either osteoporosis or low bone mass.

7. Seventy percent of fractures happen in people over 65.

8. Osteoporotic fractures lead to 2.5 million medical office visits annually.

9. Women who have a bone density test have 35 percent fewer hip fractures than those who do not, yet less than 24 percent of eligible Medicare patients are tested.



**Every three minutes, someone has a fracture due to osteoporosis—but you don't have to be among them.**

Every three minutes, someone has a fracture due to osteoporosis—but you don't have to be among them.

### What To Do About It

The experts at the National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF) say that if you're a woman over 65 or a man over 70 or if you're over 50, postmenopausal and have risk factors for osteoporosis, you should probably talk to your doctor or other health care provider about getting a bone density test, especially if you've never had one.

This test tells you if you have normal bone density, low bone density (osteopenia) or osteoporosis. It's the only way to diagnose osteoporosis. The lower your bone density, the greater your risk of breaking a bone. The test can help you and your health care provider predict your chance of breaking a bone in the future and consider treatment to prevent that.

### Testing Your Bones

X-rays are not able to show osteoporosis until the disease is well advanced, so the NOF recommends a simple, painless, non-invasive bone density test using a central DXA machine to diagnose osteoporosis. DXA stands for dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry. The test usually takes less than 15 minutes—though some newer testing devices are much faster than that.

### Understanding The Results

Your bone density test results are reported using T-scores. A T-score shows how much your bone density is higher or lower than the bone density of a healthy 30-year-old adult. A health care provider looks at the lowest T-score to diagnose osteoporosis.

### What Your T-score Means

According to the World Health Organization (WHO):

- A T-score of -1.0 or above is normal bone density. Examples are 0.9, 0 and -0.9.

- A T-score between -1.0 and -2.5 means you have low bone density. Examples are T-scores of -1.1, -1.6 and -2.4.

- A T-score of -2.5 or below is a diagnosis of osteoporosis. Examples are T-scores of -2.6, -3.3 and -3.9.

The lower a person's T-score, the lower the bone density. A T-score of -1.0 is lower than a T-score of 0.5 and a T-score of -3.5 is lower than a T-score of -3.0.

### Learn More

For further information about osteoporosis and your own risk, see your doctor. Many doctors are learning more about testing devices at [www.hologic.com](http://www.hologic.com).