



# Osteoporosis

## **Definition:**

Osteoporosis is a condition in which the bones become weak and can break from a minor fall or in serious cases, from a simple action such as a sneeze.

## **Facts:**

- Osteoporosis can strike at any age.
- Osteoporosis is a major public health threat for an estimated 44 million Americans or 55 percent of Americans 50 years of age and older.
- In the U.S. today, 10 million individuals are estimated to already have the disease and almost 34 million more are estimated to have low bone mass placing them at increased risk for osteoporosis.

## **Risk Factors:**

GENDER	Women get osteoporosis more often than men.
AGE	The older you are, the greater your risk of osteoporosis.
BODY SIZE	Small, thin women are at greater risk.
ETHNICITY	White and Asian women are at highest risk. Black and Hispanic women have a lower risk.
FAMILY	Osteoporosis tends to run in families. If a family member has osteoporosis or breaks a bone, there is a greater chance that you will too.

## **Symptoms:**

Osteoporosis is called the "silent disease" because bone is lost with no signs. You may not know that you have osteoporosis until a strain, bump, or fall causes a bone to break.

## **Prevention:**

- Get the daily recommended amounts of calcium and vitamin D
- Engage in regular weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercise
- Avoid smoking and excessive alcohol
- Talk to your healthcare provider about bone health
- Have a bone density test and take medication when appropriate and if recommended by your physician.