Bone Health and Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis: A disease that weakens your bones, making them more likely to break.

Why Should I Be Concerned?

- Ten million Americans have osteoporosis, and 43 million are at high risk.
- In the US, 55% of people over the age of 50 have or are at risk for osteoporosis.
- **You do not feel your bones becoming weaker—This means you may not realize that you have osteoporosis.**

What Can I Do?

- Talk to your doctor about getting a bone mineral density test (DXA Scan)
- Weight-bearing and resistance exercises can increase bone mass
- Exercise each day to build muscles and reduce the risk of falls
- Get enough Calcium and Vitamin D to improve bone health
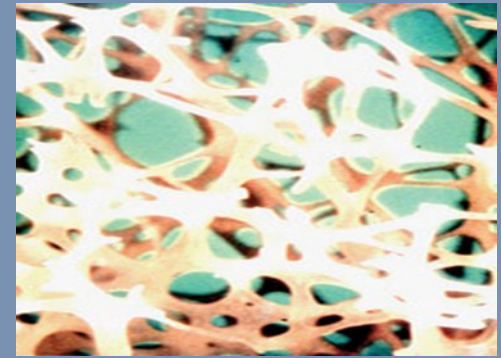- Avoid bone-robbers like caffeine, sugar, soda, alcohol, and smoking

How Is Osteoporosis Diagnosed?

- Bone mineral density is tested with a DXA
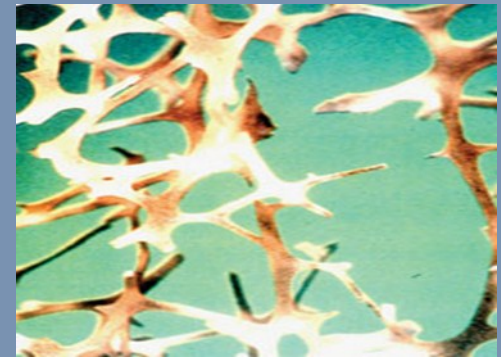- Results are reported as a T-Score or Z-Score

| T-Score	Meaning
Greater than –1.0	Normal
-2.5 to –1.0	Low Bone Mass
Less than –2.5	Osteoporosis

What Do Bones Look Like?

Healthy Bone

Osteoporotic Bone

What Are The Risk Factors?

- **Age:** Women 65 and older; Men 70 and older

- **Low body weight**

- **Having previous fractures**

- **Family history of fractures**

- **Currently smoking and/or drinking 2 glasses of alcohol daily**

- **Having taken medications that can cause bone loss, such as:**

  - Glucocorticoids (Doses equal to Prednisone of 5 mg daily for > 3 months)

  - Some anti-epileptic drugs

  - Some cancer treatment drugs

  - Heparin

  - Aluminum containing antacids

  - Lithium

  - Proton pump inhibitors (Nexium, Prevacid, Prilosec)

  - Thyroid hormones in excess concentrations

  - Some antidepressants (Lexapro, Prozac, Zoloft)

- **Having other diseases that affect the bones:**

  - Rheumatoid arthritis

  - Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes

  - Hyperthyroidism

  - Malabsorption syndromes or malnutrition (celiac, Crohn's)

  - Liver disease

- **Early menopause before the age of 45 years old**

- **An inactive lifestyle or conditions that decrease mobility**

  - Stroke, Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis

Other Ways To Test For Osteoporosis?

- FRAX Tool developed by the World Health Organization to evaluate your personal fracture risk within the next 10 years (http://www.shef.ac.uk/FRAX/)

- Measuring kyphosis (excessive outward curvature of the spine) and loss of height to detect vertebral fractures

  - One way to measure this is the *Occiput to Wall Test.* This test measures the distance between the back of the head and the wall when standing upright. A distance of greater than 5 cm suggests a vertebral fracture.
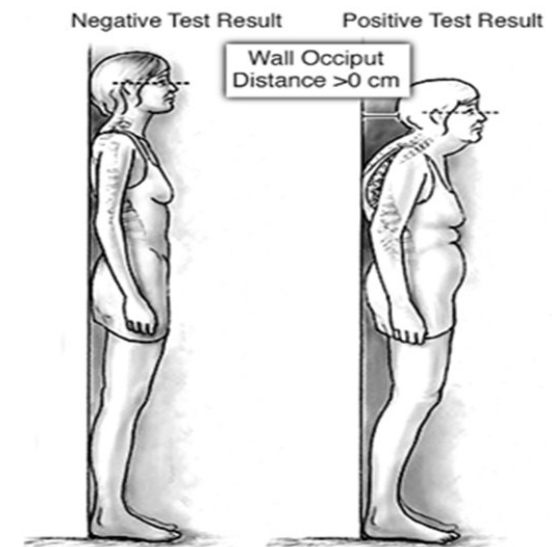
The Interagency Council on Osteoporosis
and the
NJ Department of Human Services
www.state.nj.us/humanservices/doas/healthy/osteoporosis
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