

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO INCREASE YOUR BONE DENSITY: THIS WORKS AT ANY AGE

This is simply changing the risk factors that we can control. We may not be able to make ourselves younger or change our family history, but we can watch what we eat and make lifestyle changes.

DIET

Make sure you get 800 – 1000 mg of calcium each day (see overleaf). The calcium content in food is usually displayed on the label, you should get used to reading these (if you do not already).



EXERCISE AND SUNLIGHT

If you are not on your feet at least 4 hours every day, you should exercise for at least 30 minutes every day or every other day – in fact regular exercise is good no matter how active you are during the day. This has many benefits besides making your bones stronger, with positive changes on your weight, heart and muscle tone. Exercise really strengthens your bones; studies have shown that tennis players have 30% more bone density in their serving arm than their non-serving arm, and long distance runners have a higher than average bone density in their spine. In addition to exercise, sunlight is good for you as it builds up Vitamin D, which is good for your bones (not too much sun though, don't get sunburned).



SMOKING AND TOO MUCH ALCOHOL

No prizes for guessing that these are bad for you, but in addition to all the other things they do to you, they reduce your bone density.



COFFEE

Drink less than 4 cups a day (or equivalent) if you want to really look after your bones.



Pacific Radiology

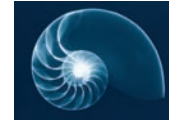
www.pacificradiology.co.nz

DEXA is available at the following Pacific Radiology branches:

Lambton Quay
Johnsonville
Lower Hutt
Paraparaumu

FOR AN APPOINTMENT
PLEASE TELEPHONE

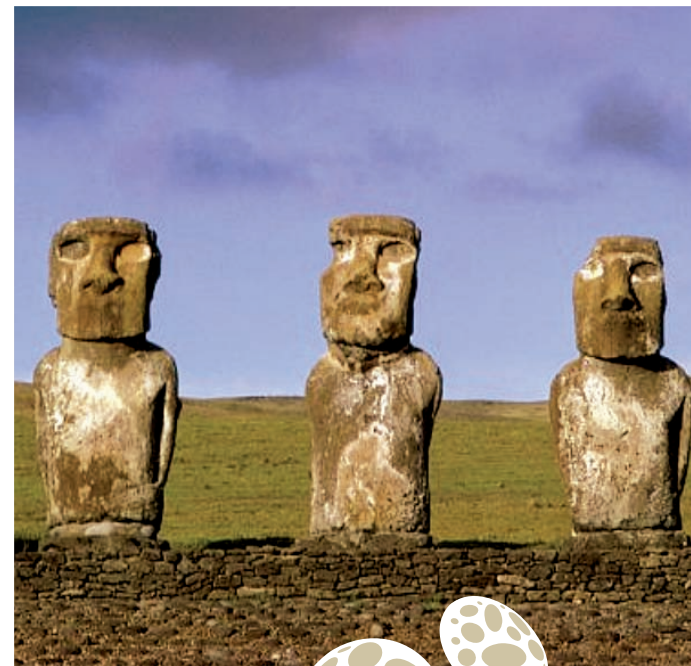
04 978 5500



Pacific Radiology

OSTEOPOROSIS

Patient Information



PARTNERSHIPS IN MEDICINE

OSTEOPOROSIS

THE SILENT EPIDEMIC

Osteoporosis means bone fragility, this term is now synonymous with low bone mineral density (BMD).

It is a "silent disease" because bone loss occurs without symptoms. You may not know your bones are weak until a sudden bump, strain or fall causes a fracture or a vertebra to collapse.

Women are more susceptible to osteoporosis because they have less bone mass than men, and they can lose up to 20% of their bone mass in the 5 to 7 years following menopause (everyone loses bone density

as they age, it is just faster following the menopause).

Common bones fractured are the spine, hip, wrist and ribs.

90% of hip fractures are due to osteoporosis, up to 25% of people who suffer a hip fracture will die in the 12 months following the fracture, more than half will never be able to walk again unaided or remain in their own home.

More than half of women aged over 60 will break a bone because of osteoporosis. Fractures due to osteoporosis account for more deaths in women than cancer of the ovaries and breast combined.

Osteoporotic fracture of the spine



CHECK YOUR RISK FOR OSTEOPOROSIS

- Female
- Caucasian or Asian
- Thin, small framed
- Older than 60
- Family history of osteoporosis
- A previous fracture
- Parents had a fracture
- Early menopause (less than 45), or ovaries removed
- Prone to falls
- Smoking
- Drink more than 4 cups of coffee (or equivalent) per day
- Regularly drink more than two alcoholic drinks per day
- Ever having times of several missed periods in a row (not due to pregnancy or the menopause)
- Not getting outside for at least 30 minutes per day
- Being inactive (on feet less than 4 hours per day)
- Chronic illness including
 - anorexia and depression
 - kidney, liver and bowel disease
 - rheumatoid arthritis
- Some medicines including
 - steroids
 - epilepsy medicine
 - tranquillisers
- Low dietary calcium (see over)

HOW WERE YOUR RISK FACTORS?

The more boxes you ticked, the more likely you are to have osteoporosis and an osteoporotic fracture.

The hip fracture rate for women with normal bone density and no more than 2 risk factors is 1 in 1000 per year.

This increases to 1 in 40 per year for women with low bone density and 5 or more risk factors.

The more boxes you ticked, the more important it becomes to have your bone density checked.

This is a quick and painless procedure. It is performed on a DEXA machine while you lie down, and takes about 20 minutes. We can do this at Pacific Radiology (see over for our locations). You can ring for an appointment during work hours, you do not need a doctor's referral.



DAILY CALCIUM NEEDS

- You should have 800 – 1000 mg of calcium per day, or about 4 serves of dairy food.
- A serve is a glass of milk, pot of yoghurt, 40 grams of cheese, or equivalent.
- Calcium enriched foods contain more, you will need to read the label.