

Inside Story HIGHLIGHTS

From the Pacific Radiology Referrer Newsletter



Pacific Radiology



DEXA Matters

Fracture intervention programme

This programme was begun last year to help identify at risk patients. From May to August 2009 we notified referrers of 96 patients aged between 60 and 75 who had sustained a fracture. Thirty seven patients returned for a DEXA:

- > 5 had normal bone density.
- > 32 of these had reduced bone density (20 osteopaenic and 12 osteoporotic) with 14 patients requiring treatment.

Internationally it is recognised that osteoporosis is both under-detected and under-diagnosed; the low number of normals in our sample suggests that we are no different.

The burden of osteoporosis is large; apart from individual suffering the cost to New Zealand is approximately \$1,133 million per annum. With an ageing population it is necessary to be proactive if this is to be kept in check.

When reporting fractures we often do not know the magnitude of the forces involved and although every attempt is made to avoid unnecessary notifications this is not always possible.

We are glad to be making a contribution to patient care beyond the normal gambit of radiology and look forward to continuing to work with you on this project.

T Score versus Z Score

The T score is the comparison of the patient's bone density to that of the reference population (healthy young females) and the WHO definitions of osteopaenia / osteoporosis are based on this.

The Z score is the comparison of the patient's bone density to that of their age and sex matched peers. When the Z score is 2 or more standard deviations below the mean you should consider looking for a secondary cause for the bone loss.

Osteoporosis New Zealand

The new OPNZ website (www.bones.org.nz) is now running. It is easy to navigate and a great resource for you and your patients.

As usual your views and comments are most welcome.

~ **Mike Nowitz**



Mike Nowitz