

ST. NICHOLAS HOSPITAL HEALTHSOURCE

Osteoporosis in Men

Recognized as a major health risk for women, osteoporosis also affects many men who may also have low bone density making them vulnerable to painful fractures. In fact, two million American men have osteoporosis, while another 12 million are at risk for the disease. While there are considerably less than the 30 million American women who suffer either from osteoporosis or low bone density, men should be aware of their risk factors and make the lifestyle changes that can decrease their potential for developing the disease.

The following risk factors are associated with osteoporosis in men:

- Prolonged exposure to certain medications, such as steroids used to treat asthma or arthritis
- Chronic kidney, lung, and stomach diseases, especially those, which alter hormone levels
- Undiagnosed low levels of testosterone
- Excessive use of alcohol and cigarettes
- Low calcium intake
- Inadequate physical activity
- Age (bone loss increases with age)
- Heredity
- Race—white men appear to be at greatest risk for developing the disease Vitamin D deficiency

If you are male and over 50 years of age, your physician should take a complete medical history. Your doctor may order a Bone Mineral Density (BMD) Test, a special type of x-ray that can diagnose osteoporosis, especially if you notice a loss in height, change in posture, or sudden back pain.

Changing unhealthy habits such as smoking, excessive alcohol intake, and lack of exercise can prevent osteoporosis in men. A regular exercise routine including weight-bearing activities such as walking, jogging, racquet sports, stair climbing, team sports and resistance training, helps preserve bone density.



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