

Good Bones, Good Health, Good Life A Look at Osteoporosis

1. How is bone strength measured?

Currently, there is no accurate measure of overall bone strength and bone quality. BMD is used as a proxy measure and accounts for 70% of bone strength.

2. What are some of the risk factors for osteoporosis?

- Age > 65 years
- Vertebral compression fracture
- Fragility fracture after age 40
- Family history of osteoporotic fracture
- Primary hyperparathyroidism
- Hypogonadism
- Early menopause
- Osteopenia seen on X-ray
- Malabsorption syndrome

For an in-depth look at osteoporosis, please go to page 112.

Based on an article by **Monique Camerlain, MD, FRCPC**

3. Who should be tested for osteoporosis?

According to the OSC:

- All post-menopausal women and men over 50 should be assessed for risk factors of osteoporosis.
- BMD testing is appropriate for targeted case finding among people under 65 and for all women 65 years or older because of the high risk of osteoporotic fracture.

4. Which medications are most effective in treatment?

Only alendronate and risedronate reduce the risk of both vertebral and non-vertebral fractures. Their new weekly formulations are also preferred by patients and improve compliance. New agents, such as ibandronate and zoledronate, offer effectiveness with less frequent dosing.