

Osteoporosis: Can It Happen to You?

Osteoporosis is a major public health threat for 44 million Americans. Ten million individuals already have osteoporosis and 34 million more have low bone mass placing them at increased risk for developing osteoporosis and the fractures it causes. Eighty percent of those affected by osteoporosis are women. Known as “the silent thief,” osteoporosis progresses without symptoms or pain until bones start to break, generally in the hip, spine, or wrist. Learn more about this bone-thinning disease that causes serious fractures. Complete the questionnaire to determine your risk for developing osteoporosis.

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
1. Do you have a small, thin frame and/or are you Caucasian or Asian?		
2. Have you or a member of your immediate family broken a bone as an adult?		
3. Are you a postmenopausal woman?		
4. Have you had an early or surgically-induced menopause?		
5. Have you taken high doses of thyroid medication or used glucocorticoids ≥5 mg a day (for example, prednisone) for 3 or more months?		
6. Have you taken, or are you taking, immunosuppressive medications or chemotherapy to treat cancer?		
7. Is your diet low in dairy products and other sources of calcium?		
8. Are you physically inactive?		
9. Do you smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol in excess?		

The more times you answer “yes,” the greater your risk for developing osteoporosis. See your healthcare provider and contact Ravinia Associates in Internal Medicine for more information.

Osteoporosis is a complex disease and not all of its causes are known. However, when certain risk factors are present, your likelihood of developing osteoporosis is increased. Therefore, it is important for you to determine your risk of developing osteoporosis and take action to prevent it now.

Osteoporosis is preventable if bone loss is detected early. If the questions suggest that you are at risk for developing osteoporosis, see your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider may recommend that you have a bone mass measurement test. This test will safely and accurately measure your bone density and reliably predict your risk of future fracture.

If you already have osteoporosis, you can live actively and comfortably by seeking proper medical care and making some adjustments to your lifestyle. Your healthcare provider may prescribe a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D, a regular program of weight-bearing exercise and medical treatment.