



An estimated ten million people suffer from osteoporosis in the United States according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation.

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Stryker Instruments
4100 East Milham Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49001 USA
t: 269 323 7700 f: 800 999 3811
toll free: 800 253 3210

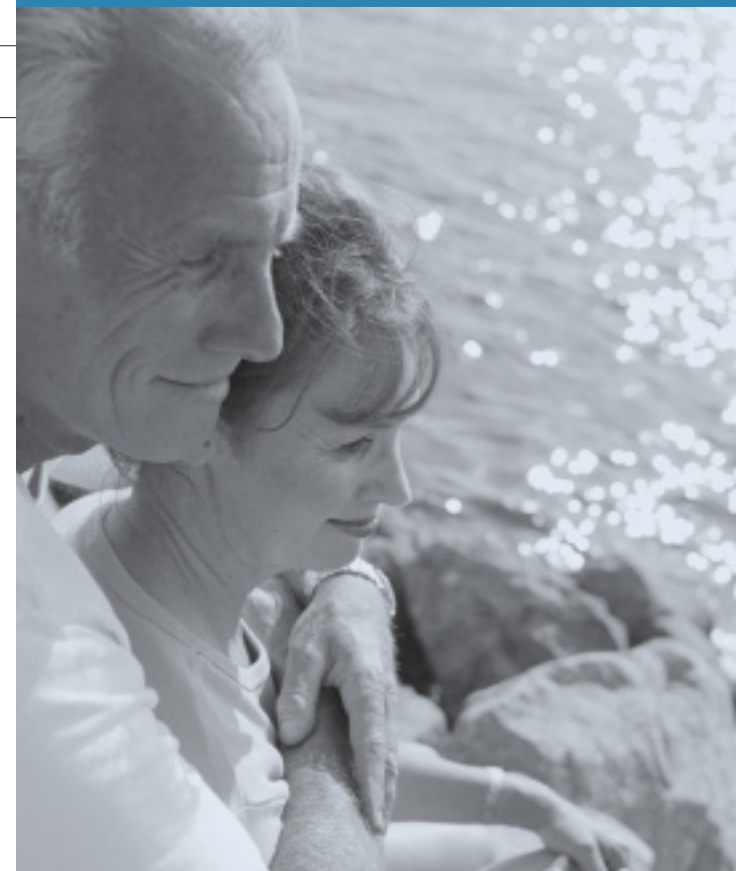
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Interventional Pain

Understanding Osteoporosis

Often called the “silent disease”, osteoporosis usually goes undetected until injury occurs



understanding osteoporosis

What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis, or porous bones, is a disease characterized by a loss of bone mass and structural deterioration of bone tissue. As people get older, bone mass decreases and our bones become more fragile and thus more likely to break. Osteoporosis is a widespread threat affecting approximately 44 million Americans. Osteoporosis accounts for an estimated 1.5 million fractures annually. The areas most likely to be affected by osteoporosis are the spine, hip, and wrist bones. Hip fractures often result in a loss of mobility and functionality. Spinal or compression fractures may cause a loss of height, severe pain, and the abnormal curvature of one's spine. Often called the "silent disease", osteoporosis usually goes undetected until the fracture actually happens.

Osteoporosis and women

Women are four times as likely to develop this disease than men. Of the 10 million Americans who have the disease eighty percent are women. Women have a higher propensity to develop osteoporosis because they do not have a high level of bone tissue. After menopause women lose more bone mass quickly as their level of estrogen begins to decline. An estimated 1 in 2 women will experience an osteoporotic fracture in her lifetime.



Who is at Risk?

Certain factors and habits will often lead to a loss of bone mass, which will often lead to osteoporosis.

"Women's Disease": 80% of those who develop or will develop osteoporosis are women.

Age: As you age, chances of developing osteoporosis increase as you continue to lose bone mass

Dietary Factors: People who have a lack Calcium and Vitamin D in their diets are at greater risk

Cigarettes and coffee: Smoking and a high level of coffee intake are factors that lead to a decline in bone density

Prevention and Treatment

Preventing and treating osteoporosis is very important. There is no cure for the disease, however, you have many options to combat the disease. The risk factors discussed earlier such as a lack of exercise, bad diet, and smoking can easily be reduced. In order to prevent or slow osteoporosis the following steps can always be adopted:

Diet: The best way to increase your calcium intake is through a balanced diet made. A good portion of dairy products should be included. Vitamin D intake is critical as well. Vitamin D and calcium supplements are also an option. Women over the age of 50 need at least 1200 milligrams of calcium with at least 400 units of vitamin D every day.

Smoking: The best policy is to QUIT. People who smoke have a much higher chance to lose bone mass and eventually develop osteoporosis.

Exercise: Exercising regularly helps maintain bone mass and increases overall strength. Activities to increase muscle endurance such as walking, bicycling, and light weight training are excellent ways to maintain healthy bones.



Menopausal and post-menopausal: Estrogen helps to maintain bone mass, as women go through menopause estrogen levels are greatly reduced causing their bone mass to decline

Lack of Exercise: Inactivity and immobility also increases the chance of osteoporosis.

Family History: It has been noted by some studies that genetic factors influence one's bone density as well

Medications: Various analgesics are known to reduce bone mass if taken for an extended period of time

Medications: A number of medications and analgesics are available for treatment of osteoporosis. However, no substantial efficacy of these medications in reducing osteoporosis and risk of fracture has been proven.

Vertebroplasty: Percutaneous vertebroplasty (PV) is a minimally invasive procedure, which has demonstrated highly successful outcomes. PV has been proven to significantly reduce the chronic pain associated with a vertebral fracture. Success rates as high as 90% have been reported world wide. PV is a procedure where a needle is inserted through the skin into the painful vertebral body. Bone cement (poly-methylmethacrylate) is then injected into the vertebral body to stabilize the fracture. Open surgery is not required as this procedure is done under live x-ray. The procedure usually takes only 1 hour. Patients arrive about an hour before the procedure takes place and get to go home the same day. Patients do not receive general anesthesia. Only mild sedation is used along with local anesthesia for the site of the fracture. Most patients experience immediate pain relief within minutes to hours.

*This information is not meant to be substituted for the advice provided by a physician or other medical professional. You should consult with a physician or medical professional to determine what instructions may be appropriate for you.