

What is Osteoporosis?

- ✓ Osteoporosis causes bones to become brittle and weak. It is the major cause of fractures in postmenopausal women and older men.
- ✓ Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency is not a known risk factor for osteoporosis. However, some medications that are prescribed for lung disease (specifically, corticosteroids) can increase the risk of developing osteoporosis.
- ✓ Osteopenia is the stage before osteoporosis. Without treatment, osteopenia can progress to osteoporosis.

What are the Symptoms of Osteoporosis?

- ✓ Osteoporosis is a “silent” disease because it often has no symptoms.
- ✓ Individuals may not even know they have osteoporosis until they break a bone.
- ✓ The following are symptoms of osteoporosis:
 - Back pain
 - Loss of height
 - A stooped posture
 - A bone that breaks more easily than expected
 - Any fracture that occurs after age 40

Who Should Get Tested for Osteoporosis?

- ✓ A bone density scan is used to diagnose osteoporosis.
- ✓ A bone density scan is recommended for:
 - All individuals over age 40 who have received any systemic corticosteroids (such as prednisone or Medrol) or an intravenous infusion of a steroid
 - Women who are post-menopausal, regardless of age
 - Men over age 70
 - Individuals with more than 5 years of inhaled corticosteroid use

Osteoporosis Can Be Prevented

- ✓ You can reduce the risk of osteoporosis by:
 - Staying physically active and doing weight-bearing exercises such as walking
 - Eating a nutritious diet rich in calcium and vitamin D to help maintain good bone health
 - Consuming alcohol in moderation, if at all
 - Avoiding smoking; if you smoke--quit
 - Working with your physician to start monitoring bone density at an appropriate age

Osteoporosis Can Be Treated

- ✓ If you have been diagnosed with osteoporosis, work with a healthcare provider to determine the best treatment for you.
- ✓ Treatment options include:
 - Medications that can help prevent fractures
 - Drug class of first choice includes bisphosphonates
 - Many additional options are available
 - Working with a physical therapist or rehabilitation specialist who can:
 - Recommend specific exercises to strengthen and support your back
 - Teach you safe ways of moving and carrying out daily activities
 - Recommend an exercise program that is specific to your circumstances
 - Taking measures to prevent falls. Falls can be prevented through a wide range of actions, including:
 - Wearing shoes that provide support and have thin non-slip soles
 - Keeping rooms free to clutter, especially on floors
 - Using a cane or walker for added stability
 - Improving lighting in your home
 - Exercising, which can improve muscle mass and balance