
FRACTURE FAST FACTS

About Osteoporosis

- Osteoporosis is a progressive skeletal disease characterized by low bone mass and microarchitectural deterioration of bone tissue, with a consequent increase in bone fragility and susceptibility to fracture.
- For American women, osteoporosis is a major health threat. Approximately 8 million women age 50+ have osteoporosis; an additional 15 million have low bone mass, placing them at increased risk for developing the disease. By 2015, it is estimated that these figures will rise to more than 12 million and 23 million, respectively.
- Osteoporosis is often overlooked in men. In the U.S., two million men have the disease and three million have increased risk due to low bone mass. Men account for about one in five cases of osteoporosis in the U.S.
- Direct annual financial expenditures in the United States for treatment of osteoporotic fractures are estimated between \$10 to \$15 billion. This figure is expected to more than quadruple and exceed \$60 billion annually by the year 2030.

Osteoporotic Fractures

- Each year in the U.S., approximately 1.5 million fractures are associated with osteoporosis. Nearly half (700,000) are spinal fractures; other fractures commonly occur at sites such as the hip, forearm and ribs.
- More than two osteoporotic fractures occur among women every minute in the U.S.
- Up to half of American women age 50+ will experience an osteoporosis-related fracture during their lifetime.
- Women with osteoporosis who have two or more previous fractures have up to a nine times greater risk of future fracture compared with women who have not suffered a previous fracture.
- One in eight American men over age 50 is at risk for having an osteoporotic fracture.

Spinal Fractures

- Within the first year of suffering a spinal fracture, one in five women will experience an additional fracture – suggesting that osteoporosis may be a quickly progressing disease once a fracture occurs.

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- Spinal fractures occur at an earlier age than hip fractures. Previous spinal fractures increase the risk of hip fractures.
- More than one-half of spinal fractures do not come to medical attention. Because these “silent fractures” often occur during routine activity, their symptoms can be mistaken for those of a muscle strain, arthritis or a disk problem.

Impact on Quality of Life

- The accumulation of multiple spinal fractures may result in pain, height loss, deformity, functional limitations, and diminished quality of life.
- Multiple spinal fractures related to osteoporosis can lead to dramatic height loss – as much as eight inches.
- Multiple spinal compression fractures can lead to “dowager’s hump,” or kyphosis, a forward curvature of the upper spine. Kyphotic changes resulting from multiple spinal fractures make even the simplest movements difficult. Simple activities that involve reaching, twisting or bending (such as lifting a grandchild or gardening) may no longer be manageable.

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