

What is the difference **BETWEEN OSTEOPOROSIS & OSTEOPENIA?**



RISK FACTORS FOR DECREASE BONE MASS (DENSITY) INCLUDE:

- Being female
- Older age
- Having a family history of osteoporosis
- Having a small, thin frame
- Being of Caucasian, Asian or Hispanic ethnicity
- Low estrogen level in women, particularly from early menopause or following removal of the ovaries
- Diet low in calcium and/or vitamin D
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Alcohol abuse
- Cigarette smoking
- Taking high dosages of corticosteroid (e.g. prednisone, methylprednisolone) or thyroid medication

DEFINITION:

Osteoporosis is a disease that makes your bones fragile (decreased bone mass) and puts you at risk for easily breaking a bone. The hips, spine and wrist are especially at risk for fracture.

Osteopenia is not a disease but rather the condition between having normal bones and osteoporosis (i.e. bone mineral density is less than normal).

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE OSTEOPOROSIS OR OSTEOPENIA?

Osteoporosis and osteopenia do not cause symptoms until you break a bone. But your health care provider can have you tested for it. The best test is a bone density test called a Dexa scan. It is a special kind of X-ray that measures your bone density at the hips and spine. A comparison is made between your bone density and that of a young adult at peak bone density. Depending on the difference between these an assessment of your bone density can be made. This is reported as a t-score.

- Normal t-score is -1 and above
- Osteopenia is between -1 and -2.5
- Osteoporosis is at or below -2.5 (your health care provider will make recommendations for treatment)

WHAT CAN I DO TO KEEP MY BONES AS HEALTHY AS POSSIBLE?

- Eat foods with a lot of calcium, such as milk, yogurt, and green leafy vegetables
- Eat foods with a lot of vitamin D, such as milk that has vitamin D added, and fish from the ocean
- Take calcium and vitamin D pills (if you do not get enough from the food that you eat)
- Be active for at least 30 minutes, most days of the week
- Avoid smoking
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink to 1 to 2 drinks a day at most