

# Osteoporosis Fact Sheet

## OVERVIEW



Osteoporosis causes bones to become weak and fragile.<sup>1</sup> When bone becomes weak and fragile it is more likely to break (fracture) and, at times, even a bump or fall from standing height can lead to a broken bone.<sup>1</sup> Postmenopausal women are at a higher risk of developing osteoporosis;<sup>2</sup> it is estimated that 1 in 3 women aged fifty years and over will suffer a fracture caused by osteoporosis.<sup>1</sup> A fracture can be a life-changing event, making it more difficult to get around and maintain an independent lifestyle.<sup>1</sup>

## FACTORS THAT CAN PUT YOU AT RISK



A risk factor is something that increases your chance of developing a condition and osteoporosis has several known risk factors that can cause bone to lose strength. Knowing and understanding the risk factors can help you identify if there are things you can change to strengthen your bones. Key risk factors for developing osteoporosis may include:<sup>3</sup>

Advanced age	Thin and small body frames	Low calcium intake
Ethnic background (Caucasian or Asian)	Low body mass index (BMI)	Low Vitamin D level
Gender (female)	Cigarette smoking	Lack of exercise
Family history	Excessive alcohol and caffeine consumption	Early menopause

## DIAGNOSIS



Osteoporosis is under-diagnosed and often goes untreated,<sup>4</sup> which can result in serious and costly health consequences.<sup>1</sup> The condition is often asymptomatic, as it cannot be seen or may not be felt because the loss of bone occurs without any signs or symptoms.<sup>1</sup> It is often called a silent disease.<sup>2</sup> A diagnosis can involve one or more of the following steps:<sup>5,6</sup>

Bone mineral density test*	Medical history	Physical examination	X-ray
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\*A number of different bone mineral density tests are available but the most commonly used is a dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) scan.<sup>6</sup> DXA is a low radiation x-ray capable of detecting small percentages of bone loss.<sup>1,6</sup>

## TREATMENT



Osteoporosis is a chronic condition,<sup>7</sup> and while there is no cure, there are steps patients can take to manage this condition.<sup>7</sup> Patients with an established osteoporosis diagnosis may be treated with medication that can help slow bone loss and/or help increase bone density to reduce the risk for future fractures.<sup>7</sup> The management of the disease can be supported by appropriate exercises and proper nutrition, including calcium and vitamin D, fall prevention strategies and avoiding tobacco and excess alcohol intake.<sup>7,8</sup>

## FAST FACTS

The World Health Organization has declared osteoporosis a **public health problem**.<sup>9</sup>

An estimated **20 million people in the EU6\*** have osteoporosis.<sup>10</sup>

**1 in 3 women over the age of 50** will experience a fracture due to osteoporosis.<sup>11</sup> After menopause, women who develop a vertebral fracture are at a substantial risk. Within a year, 19.2% are likely to experience a second fracture.<sup>12</sup>

The burden of osteoporosis costs the EU 37 billion EUR every year.<sup>10</sup>

\*EU6: France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK

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## References

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