



The impact of fragility fractures due to osteoporosis is being ignored

- **New survey reveals that 61 per cent of women over 60 have little or no knowledge of osteoporosis,¹ despite the fact that one in three is likely to develop a fragility fracture due to the condition²**
- **Over half (55 per cent) of respondents believe that fragility fractures in older age are a result of an unlucky fall or accident, rather than the result of an underlying bone condition¹**
- **More than a third (37 per cent) claimed their healthcare professional had never spoken to them about osteoporosis or fragility fractures¹**
- **Questions must be asked as to why a condition that causes more than 8.9 million fractures annually is being overlooked²**

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM (18 October, 2018) – New survey results released by UCB today, ahead of World Osteoporosis Day 2018, reveal a startling lack of awareness and understanding of osteoporosis and fragility fractures in those most at risk.

Currently, one in three women aged 50 years and above will experience a fragility fracture due to osteoporosis;² yet results released today from a new survey of more than 4,000 women aged 60+ has highlighted that 61 per cent said they have little or no knowledge of the condition.¹ In addition, 55 per cent believe that fragility fractures in older age are often a result of an unlucky fall or accident.¹

Further still, 69 per cent believe their fragile bones are an inevitable part of getting older and 70 per cent thought it inevitable that their risk of fragility fracture will increase.¹ Almost one in five people (17 per cent) commented that they felt there is very little that can be done to avoid osteoporosis, despite there being several ways to prevent bone loss and maintain bone strength.¹

Osteoporosis is estimated to affect 200 million people worldwide³ and is the most common bone disease in the world, resulting in more than 8.9 million fragility fractures each year around the globe.² It causes bones to weaken at a faster rate than normal, making them fragile and more likely to break. For people with osteoporosis, even the slightest bump or fall could result in a fragility fracture. After experiencing the first fracture, the likelihood of incurring another is five times greater in the first year following the fracture.⁴

With the global population facing a demographic shift, it is estimated that the proportion of over 60 year olds will nearly double from 12 per cent to 22 per cent between 2015 and 2050.⁵ “People are living longer, and expecting more out of life, yet the dangers that accompany this are mute,” explains Dr. Philippe Halbout, Chief Executive Officer of the International Osteoporosis Foundation. “The physical and psychological impact of osteoporosis and fragility fractures is huge, and if they are not treated with the same urgency as other diseases, then their burden could cripple healthcare systems, society, families and individuals around the world.”

Despite women aged 60+ being most at risk of osteoporosis and fragility fractures, 37 per cent of the women surveyed claimed their healthcare professional had never spoken to them about these issues.¹ The results further revealed people rely on their healthcare professional to raise topics that are pertinent to them: 54 per

cent of those surveyed said that they trust that their healthcare professional will talk to them about the subjects that they feel are most important to them,¹ while 32 per cent would like their healthcare professional to offer them more information on keeping well without them having to ask.¹

Fragility fractures have the potential to impose a significant burden on a person's life, often making everyday activities such as eating, dressing, shopping or driving difficult.⁶ For those that suffer a hip fracture, 40 per cent are not able to walk independently again and up to a quarter of those who suffer a hip fracture will die in their first year after the fracture.^{7,8,9,10}

Yet the survey also revealed that the over 60s still have a passion for life and a desire to stay active: 47 per cent often take holidays and indulge in travelling the world¹

When asked to reflect on their experiences and expectations of later life versus those of their parents' generation, 85 per cent said they felt their generation was more interested in proactively managing their health and wellbeing,¹ 84 per cent expect to live longer and healthier lives,¹ and 82 per cent expect more from their later years.¹ In spite of these aspirations, osteoporosis and fragility fractures can pose a significant threat to an active life. If the right action isn't taken from the moment that a woman suffers a fragility fracture, these aspirations and hopes for later life may not happen.

"Worldwide, fragility fractures affect one in three women aged 50 and above. Yet the survey shows those most likely to experience a fragility fracture are unaware of the condition and the significant impact it can have on their independence and quality of life," said Dr. Pascale Richetta, Head of Bone and Executive Vice President at UCB. "From the survey it's plain to see that today's over 60's maintain a great passion for life and aspirations beyond those of their parents' generation so questions must be asked as to why a condition, that today, causes more than 8.9 million fragility fractures annually and can be an obstacle to healthy ageing, is being overlooked."

For more information on osteoporosis and fragility fractures, visit ucb.com

For further information

France Nivelles, Global Communications, UCB

T +32.2.559.9178, france.nivelles@ucb.com

Laurent Schots, Media Relations, UCB

T+32.2.559.92.64, laurent.schots@ucb.com

Scott Fleming, Bone Communications Lead, UCB

T +44 7702 777378, scott.fleming@ucb.com

About the survey

UCB together with Harris Interactive Ltd. conducted a survey of women aged 60 and over. The survey was conducted in August-September 2018 as part of an initiative to investigate awareness, attitudes and perceived risk of osteoporosis and fragility fractures in ten major industrialized countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

4,504 women aged between 60+ years were interviewed online about osteoporosis and fragility fractures. There was a sample size of n=500 in most countries, except for Belgium, Denmark and Sweden where the sample size was n=333.

About UCB

UCB, Brussels, Belgium (www.ucb.com) is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery and development of innovative medicines and solutions to transform the lives of people living with severe diseases in immunology and neurology. With more than 7,500 people in approximately 40 countries, the company generated revenue of €4.5 billion in 2017. UCB is listed on Euronext Brussels (symbol: UCB). Follow us on Twitter: @UCB_news.

References

- ¹ Harris Interactive. Osteoporosis and Fragility Fracture Risk Survey 2018.
- ² Ström O, Borgström F, Kanis JA, Compston J, Cooper C, McCloskey EV, Jönsson B. Osteoporosis: burden, health care provision and opportunities in the EU: a report prepared in collaboration with the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industry Associations (EFPIA). *Arch Osteoporos*. 2011;6:59-155. doi: 10.1007/s11657-011-0060-1.
- ³ Reginster JY, Burlet N. Osteoporosis: A still increasing prevalence. *Bone*. 2006 Feb;38 (2 Suppl 1):S4-9
- ⁴ van Geel TA, van Helden S, Geusens PP, Winkens B, Dinant GJ. Clinical subsequent fractures cluster in time after first fractures. *Ann Rheum Dis* 2009;68:99–102.
- ⁵ WHO, Ageing and health: key facts. Available at <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ageing-and-health> (Last accessed: September 2018).
- ⁶ Cooper C (1997) The crippling consequences of fractures and their impact on quality of life. *Am J Med* 103:12S-17S; discussion 17S-19S
- ⁷ International Osteoporosis Foundation. The Global Burden of Osteoporosis. What you need to know, Available at: <http://www.iofbonehealth.org/data-publications/fact-sheets/what-you-need-know-about-osteoporosis> (last accessed September 2018).
- ⁸ Bentler SE, Liu L, Oribzan M, et al. The Aftermath of Hip Fracture: Discharge Placement, Functional Status Change, and Mortality. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 2009;170:1290–1299.
- ⁹ Hu F, Jiang C, Shen J, et al. Preoperative predictors for mortality following hip fracture surgery: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Injury*, 2012; 43: 676–685.
- ¹⁰ Magaziner J, Simonsick EM, Kashner TM, et al. (1990) Predictors of functional recovery one year following hospital discharge for hip fracture: a prospective study. *J Gerontol* 45: M101.