

## Osteoporosis affects us all— Men take note

**W**ith osteoporosis, your bones become thin and porous. You also lose bone strength, which means you have a greater risk of breaking a bone. Although it's often associated with women, Osteoporosis is not just a woman's disease. It is a serious health issue for men. During their lifetime, at least one in five men will break a broken bone from osteoporosis. In fact, Osteoporosis causes over 80% of all fractures in people over 50. Despite the fact that hip fractures can be more physically devastating for men than for women, men are less likely to be assessed for osteoporosis or to get treatment for osteoporosis after they break a bone.

### ***Do I need to be tested?***

You need to be tested for osteoporosis if you are 65 or older, no matter how healthy you are.

You also need to be tested if you are between 50-64 and you:

- smoke or drink 3 or more alcoholic drinks a day
- weigh less than 132 lbs (60 kg)
- have lost more than 10% of your weight after the age of 25
- have rheumatoid arthritis
- have taken steroids (like prednisone) in the past year
- take high risk medications that weaken bone (for example, hormonal treatment for prostate cancer)
- have a medical condition that causes osteoporosis

### ***How can I prevent Osteoporosis?***

#### **Stay active**

To keep your bones healthy, you need to make smart lifestyle choices. This includes being active. Make sure your exercise routine includes weight-bearing ex-



ercises like walking or jogging and resistance training exercises where you use weights or resistance bands. Exercises that promote good balance – such as Tai Chi – can also help reduce your risk of falling. However, if you have had a spine fracture, you should talk to your physiotherapist about what exercises to do to help you strengthen the core muscles in your back and stomach.

#### **Eat healthy foods**

Eat a diet that includes 3 servings of protein each day. Without enough protein, your muscles can weaken and your balance can become poor which leads to falls and fractures. You also need to eat 3 servings of dairy a day.

In addition, make sure you take a vitamin D supplement all year.

### ***What happens if I get Osteoporosis?***

Stay positive. Think about what you can do. Many people with Osteoporosis live full and active lives. With the help of drug therapy and positive lifestyle changes, you can reduce your risk of fracture. You may even improve your bone mass.

So remember - have an assessment of your bone health, stay positive, be active, and eat healthy!

Information for this article comes from [Osteoporosis Canada](#).