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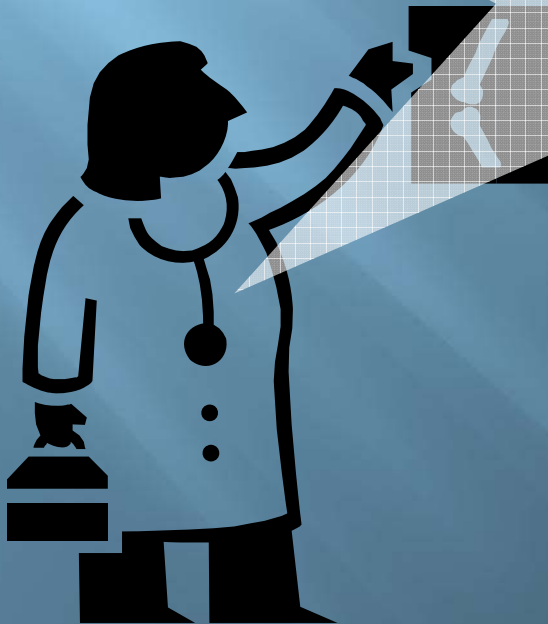


OSTEOPOROSIS



# AWS-TEE-OH-PO-RO-SIS

**“Not to be confused with ARTHRITIS,  
RHUMATOID ARTHRITIS or OSTEOMALACIA!  
Many people use these words as meaning the  
same...but they are each completely different  
from one another!”**



# What is it?

Osteoporosis is a disease of the skeleton that causes a person's bone tissue to change. It causes a loss of bone mass and strength.

It makes bones more fragile.

**This puts a person at high risk for fractures (broken bones).**



# Osteoporosis is very common!

**1/9**

men over the  
age of 50



**1/4**

women  
over the  
age of 50

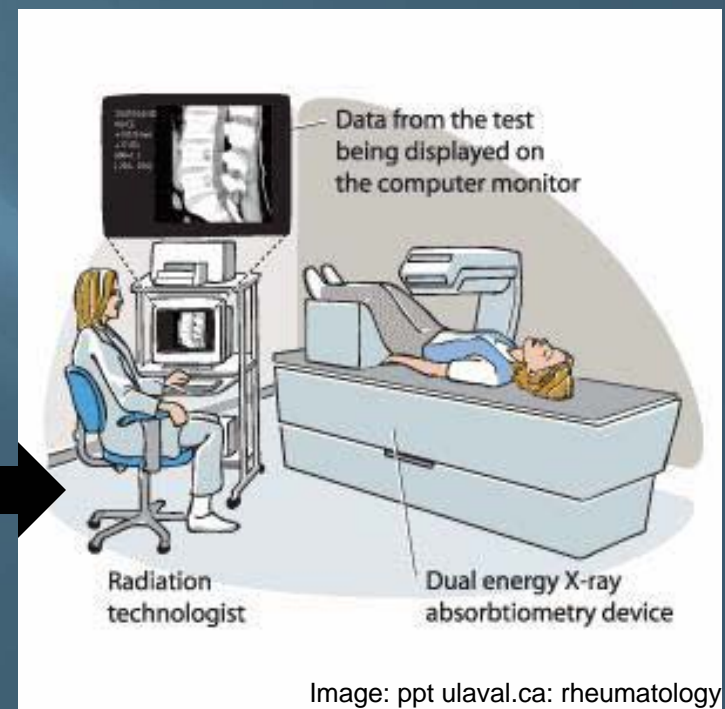
# How do they diagnose osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis can be diagnosed using a combination of many tests:

**Blood tests:** blood tests eliminate other problems that could be causing bones to be fragile (for example, blood diseases or nutritional problems).

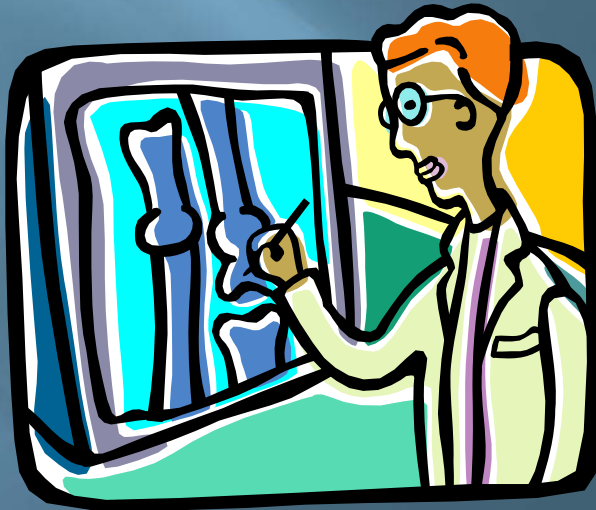
**X-rays:** X-rays will be taken of the spine because often in osteoporosis, the vertebrae (back bones) can be crushed.

**Osteodensitometry:** this test measures the bone density, mass and mineral content (using a special machine).



Another way a doctor can diagnose osteoporosis is: if you break certain bones without having had a major impact/trauma.

This is called a fragility fracture.



‘Fracture’ is another way of saying ‘broken bone’.

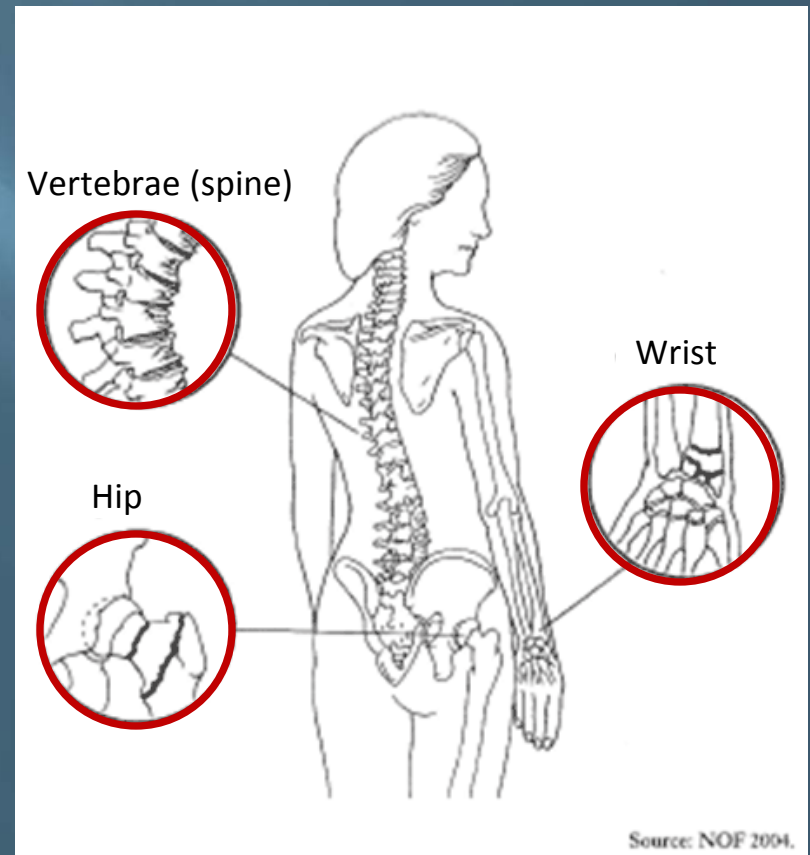
# What is a Fragility Fracture?



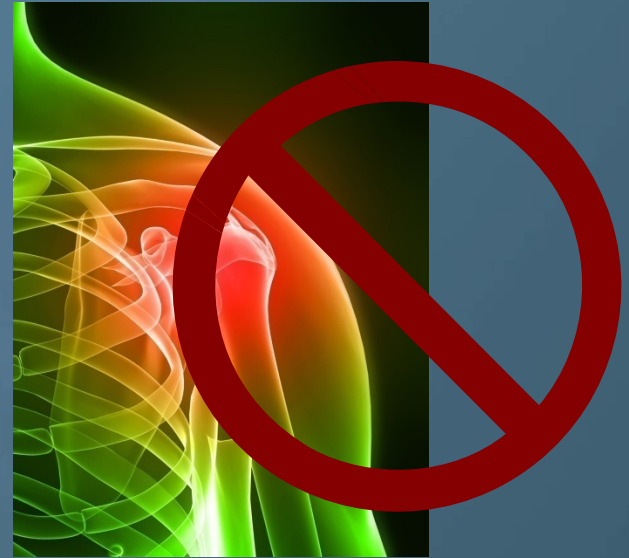
A **fragility fracture** is a type of bone break that happens by falling from standing height or less. (Not very high!)

Normally when people fall from this height, their bones do not break. If a fracture does happen, it means that the skeleton is weak.

The 3 most common places for fragility fractures:



# An Interesting FACT



**OSTEOPOROSIS DOES NOT HURT!!!**



# What are the Risk Factors For Osteoporosis?

- Family history of osteoporosis
- People that are Caucasian or Asian
- Age > 65 years old
- Low estrogen levels/Early menopause (< 45 years old)
- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Poor diet (not enough calcium)
- Taking steroids/corticosteroids or a medication called Heparin > 3 months
- Low body weight

Too much





## WHAT WILL I Notice?

Because of bone changes, over time, you might notice a loss in height. Your doctor will measure you to check for these changes.

You might notice that your back is curved. This is also because of the bone changes.

People with osteoporosis have to be more careful about falls because they can break bones easily.



# WHAT HAPPENS IF I FALL?



# WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT FALLS?

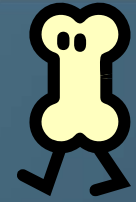
**First off...** do everything you can to make sure your bones are as strong as they can be.



That way, if you do fall, there will be less damage to your bones.



# 5 Steps to Healthy Bones



Take your vitamins



Exercise



Maintain a healthy weight

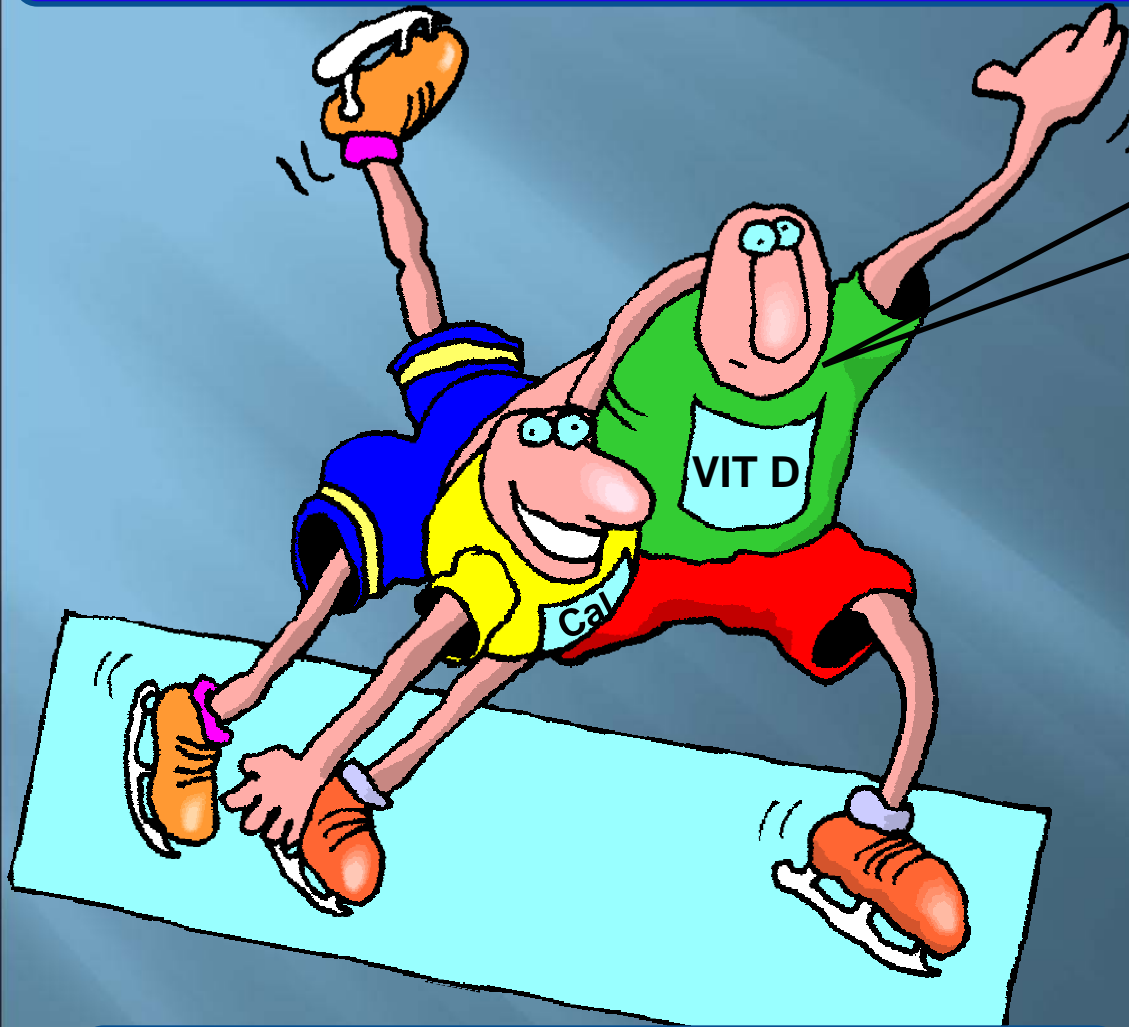


Don't smoke



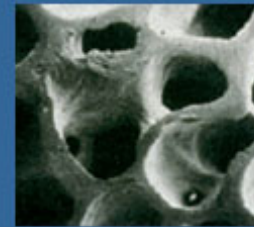
Reduce alcohol intake

# THE STRENGTH FORMING DUO:

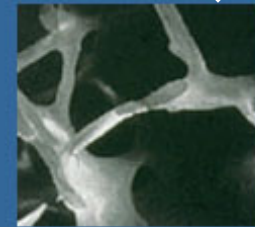


“We prevent this from happening to your bones!”

Osteoporosis



Normal Bone



Osteoporotic Bone

Image: [surgeongeneral.gov](http://surgeongeneral.gov)

## Calcium & Vitamin D

Calcium helps build strong bones.

Vitamin D helps your body to absorb more calcium

**FACT: Falls are the #1 cause of injury and injury-related death in older adults...**



**BUT THEY CAN BE PREVENTED!!!**



# FALL PREVENTION



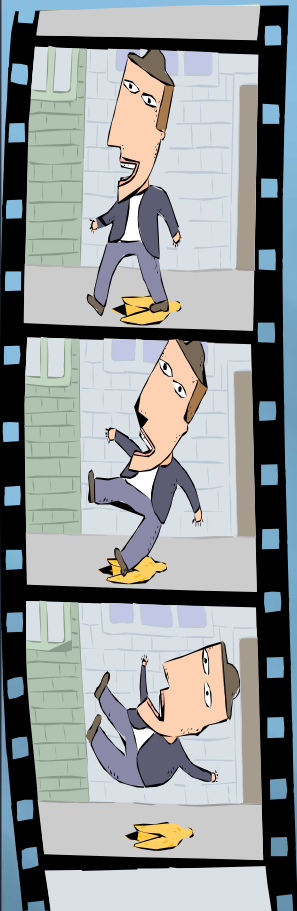
• **See your doctor regularly**. Certain medications or health problems can increase the risk of falls.

• **Exercise**. Staying physically active can increase balance, coordination and strength. These are all things that can help reduce the risk of falls. Make sure the exercises are gentle, without too much impact or contact. Try walking, swimming or Tai Chi.

• **Check your footwear**. Make sure your shoes fit you properly. Avoid high heels, shoes with soles that are very thick, or soles that are worn out. Make sure you tie your shoes properly. These tips can help prevent tripping and falling.

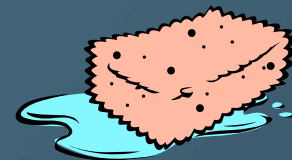


# FALL PREVENTION



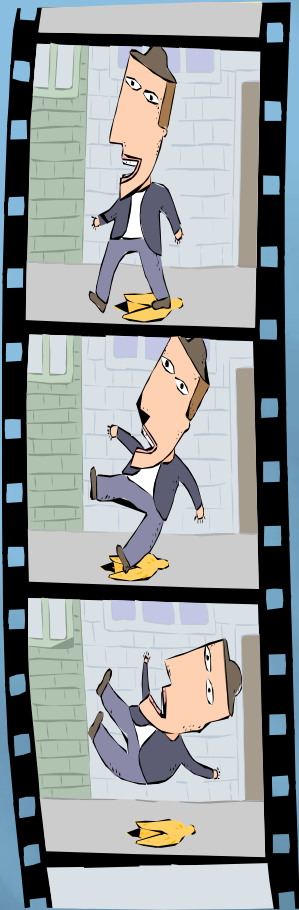
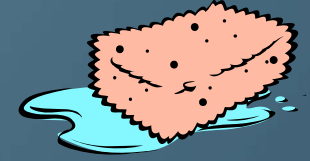
**Maintain a safe environment.**

**Here are some tips on avoiding dangerous falls in the home.**



- Wipe up spills as soon as they happen.
- Keep things you use within easy reach (no climbing).
- Keep hallways and stairways clear! (no clutter).
- Use non-slip mats in the bath/shower.

# FALL PREVENTION



- Have telephones in many rooms (no running when it rings).
- Install handrails/grab bars in the bathroom.
- Avoid rugs. If you do have rugs, secure them with slip-resistant backing.
- Make a clear path from your bed to the bathroom.
- Have snow and ice cleared from your entrance/drive way.

# FALL PREVENTION



- **And then there was LIGHT.** Make sure your environment is well lit up. High wattage (100w or more) can make seeing obstacles a lot easier. Night lights, flashlights and glow in the dark switches are great for seeing at night.

- **Shower aids.** Do you lose your balance when taking a shower? Buy a shower seat and hand-held shower head so you can shower sitting down.



- **Walking aids.** If you need a cane or a walker...make sure it is properly adjusted...and use it. Though you may not like the look of them...they just might prevent a bad fall or a broken hip. It's worth it.



# When to Seek Help



Osteoporosis in itself is not usually considered a dangerous illness...but the risks and results of a fall could have a major impact on ones' quality of life.

## RED FLAGS:

If you feel that you are limiting your activities because of a **fear of falling**, seek help.

Occupational therapists can help modify your home to make it safer.

Physiotherapists can help you come up with an exercise plan that will increase your balance, strength and coordination...reducing your risk of falls.

If you feel that your **height has changed** or your **back is becoming more 'hunched' or curved**, or if you are in **pain**, let your doctor know. They will be able to check if you do have osteoporosis and discuss possible treatments.

# WHEN TO SEEK HELP



If you fall, call 911.

Try to move/apply weight as **little** as possible.

At the hospital, a doctor will check for broken bones and search to find the cause of the fall. Knowing the cause will help prevent falls in the future.



# Great Websites for Additional Information

- Osteoporosis Canada.

<http://www.osteoporosis.ca/>

- Veterans Affairs Canada – Fall Prevention Initiative.

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/clients/sub.cfm?source=health/fallprev>

- Senior's Info: A Collaborative Online Resource

<http://www.seniorsinfo.ca/en/categories/626>

- Brigham and Women's Hospital (A Teaching Affiliate of Harvard Medical School).

[http://www.brighamandwomens.org/healthinfo/my\\_health/FiveSteps\\_OA\\_StepFive.aspx](http://www.brighamandwomens.org/healthinfo/my_health/FiveSteps_OA_StepFive.aspx)



**THANK YOU**