



OSTEOPOROSIS RISK ASSESSMENT

Osteoporosis is called the 'silent disease' because you cannot see or feel your bones losing density. Osteoporosis is a condition characterised by a degenerative thinning of bones, which can lead to chest pains and fractures. Bone degeneration starts out slowly, usually around the age of 35, and accelerates in women after menopause, and in men after the age of 65. Over the age of 60, 30% of women and 10% of men will have the disease, with half the population over 70 being affected. British women over 45 suffer approximately 200,000 fractures annually.

In the UK, one woman in three and at least one man in twelve will develop osteoporosis in their lifetime.

From middle age onwards, osteoporosis is actually more common in women than heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis and breast cancer.

Symptoms

Sufferers frequently describe a dull uncomfortable, achy feeling, which is not necessarily localised to any one area, or chronic back pain with muscle spasms along one or both sides of the spine. These pains worsen with sitting and standing, and are relieved by lying down. One simple indicator of osteoporosis is a decrease in height. Another warning sign may be tooth loss, because gum inflammation can result from bone degeneration.

Risk factors for osteoporosis

- Family history of osteoporosis
- White or Asian race
- Poor diet and smoking
- Excessive alcohol intake
- Gastric/ small bowel resection
- Lack of exercise
- Underweight
- Long term steroid therapy
- Long term use of anticonvulsants
- Nulliparity
- Postmenopause and premature menopause
- Short stature and small bones
- High intake of carbonated drinks
- Smoking
- Old age
- Chronic stress
- History of fractures
- Hormonal Imbalances, including hyperparathyroidism and hyperthyroidism

Osteoporosis risk assessment enables your practitioner to:

- Identify risk of developing osteoporosis.
- Identify rate of bone breakdown.
- Monitor effectiveness of supplement, dietary or anti-resorptive therapy

Sample requirements

1st or 2nd morning urine sample

Nationwide Test Kit Service

Most of the tests involve simple kits that can be used in your own home. Some may require the help of a nurse or GP. If you cannot visit the laboratory, you can phone and arrange for your kit to be sent in the post. Once samples have been taken, you simply post the test kit back to the laboratory. We would encourage you to use guaranteed delivery and not to send kits over the weekend.

For further information consult your practitioner, or call us today on 020 8336 7750

