

It's hip to know your risk



For both men and women, awareness of risk and early diagnosis are key to the maintenance of good bone health. To avoid premature bone loss, you need to be proactive about understanding your personal risk factors for osteoporosis.

1. Age

As we age we are at greater risk of breaking a bone as the protective effect of our hormones reduces, and our skeleton rebuilds at a slower rate than it is removed.

2. Low body weight

People who are underweight (with a BMI of less than 20) have significantly increased fracture risk.

3. A history of fractures

If you've broken a bone after a seemingly minor injury, such as a simple slip, trip or fall, since your 50th birthday (especially a wrist, shoulder, spine or hip bone), there's a high chance you will break another within a year.

4. A family history of osteoporosis

Bone health can be inherited, so if anyone in your immediate family has broken a hip, rapidly lost height, developed a stooped back, or been diagnosed with osteoporosis, your own risk increases.

5. Smoking

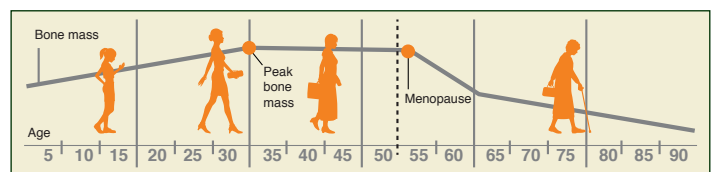
Smoking is harmful to bone health and increases future fracture risk.

6. Certain medications

Some medicines have a critical role in managing other diseases but unfortunately have a negative effect on bone health, including medications used to treat rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, breast cancer, prostate cancer, and HIV.

7. Menopause (especially if early – 45 yrs. or earlier)

After menopause, oestrogen levels decline rapidly, causing bones to lose calcium and other minerals at a much faster rate.



8. Excessive alcohol intake

More than two units of alcohol per day can significantly raise your fracture risk.

Making these changes can be very beneficial to your bone health. If you have broken a bone following a simple slip, trip or fall since your 50th birthday, you are twice as likely to break another bone in the future. Make this first fracture your last.

Know Your Bones™

Visit bones.org.nz and complete the Know Your Bones™ online bone health assessment - you'll get a personalised report explaining your risk of fracture and recommendations for better bone health.

If you would like to assist us in helping others like yourself, please consider donating to Bone Health NZ. Visit our website www.bones.org.nz and click donate.