

A Bone Mineral Densitometry test can determine whether you have osteoporosis **and** if you are likely to develop it in the future.

Currently, an estimated 1.4 million Canadians are at risk for osteoporosis-related fractures, including one in four women and one in eight men over the age of 50.

*The Corporation pledges to offer a professional team who, with the support of a devoted auxiliary, will provide a broad range of acute and long-term health services for the members of its communities. The Corporation pledges to provide these services and programs in a compassionate and fiscally responsible manner for the mutual benefit of its patients and residents.*

For more information,  
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## Bone Mineral Densitometry



With our aging population and the huge potential for morbidity and mortality caused by osteoporosis-related fractures of the hip and spine, Bone Mineral Densitometry (BMD) has become an important tool to help physicians diagnose osteoporosis.

# Patient Information

## What is Bone Mineral Densitometry?

In the past, a single beam x-ray was used to measure bone density. This type of test worked well for looking at bones where there is not much tissue (the wrist, for example).

Bone Mineral Densitometry (BMD) uses two x-ray beams, each with different energy levels. The amount of radiation exposure is low. The beams – one high energy, the other low energy – are measured as they pass through the bone. The amount of x-rays that pass through the bone varies depending on the bone's thickness. Based on the difference of the two beams, the bone density can be measured.

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## BMD Facts

- SHORT TIME SCANNING (10-20 MINUTES)
- RELATIVELY SAFE, WITH A LOW DOSE OF RADIATION (LESS THAN A REGULAR X-RAY)
- NO NEEDLES, NO INJECTIONS AND NO PAIN
- NO SPECIAL PREPARATIONS REQUIRED (WEAR LIGHT, LOOSE CLOTHING THAT HAS NO METAL ZIPPERS, CLASPS OR BUTTONS)

## Our Bones

Bones are living tissue. They contain cells that continually take away old bone and replace it with new bone. When you are young, your body makes more bone than it takes away. Between the ages of 35 and 40, your body begins to take away more bone than it makes. This bone loss can eventually lead to osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis is a condition where bones become thin and weak as bone tissue is lost faster than it can be replaced. It causes brittle bones – especially in the wrist, spine and hip. Some medical conditions, eating disorders and medications can also speed up the process of bone loss. As the condition is painless, people with osteoporosis are often unaware of it until their bone collapses or breaks.



## Who Should Be Tested?

- YOU ARE MENOPAUSAL AND THINKING ABOUT HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY
- YOU ARE TAKING GLUCOCORTICOID MEDICATION
- YOU HAVE RECENTLY HAD A FRACTURE IN WHICH OSTEOPOROSIS IS SUSPECTED
- YOU HAVE OSTEOPOROSIS AND YOU AND YOUR DOCTOR ARE MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR TREATMENT
- YOU HAVE PRIMARY HYPERPARATHYROIDISM
- YOU ARE OLDER THAN 65
- YOU ARE POST-MENOPAUSAL AND HAVE A HISTORY OF FRACTURES
- YOU HAVE BEEN UNDERGOING CHEMOTHERAPY (ESPECIALLY FOR HEMATOLOGIC OR BREAST CANCER), AND BONE LOSS NEEDS TO BE CONFIRMED
- YOU ARE A YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAS MISSED PERIODS
- YOU ARE A MAN AND HAVE LOW TESTOSTERONE LEVELS
- YOUR DOCTOR HAS DETERMINED THAT YOU ARE A HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUAL