

## Who Should Have a Bone Density Test?

It is recommended that a person have a bone density test if:

- You're a woman age 65 or older
- You're 60 and at increased risk of osteoporosis

The older you get, the higher your risk of osteoporosis because your bones become weaker as you age. Race also makes a difference, so if you are white or of Southeast Asian descent you are at a higher risk. Also, if you have multiple risk factors you should have a bone density test.



## Preparing for Your DEXA Test

To prepare for the test you can eat and drink as usual, just do not take any calcium supplement for 24 hours before the test. Dress in loose, comfortable clothing with nothing metal, such as zippers, buttons, or buckles.

During the test you will lay on a cushioned bed while a scanner passes over you. The test will only take around 20 minutes with minimal radiation exposure. Following the test your doctor will contact you with the results.



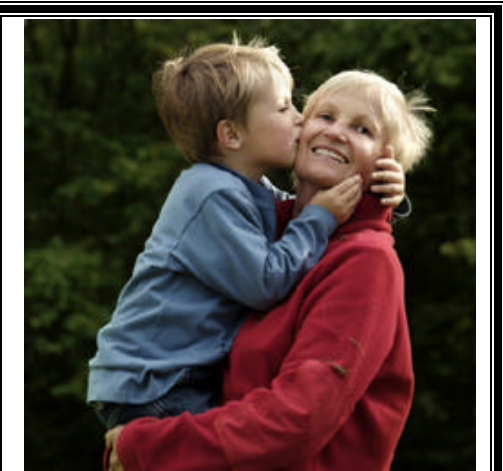
**Where can I find more information concerning Bone Density Testing and Osteoporosis?**

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/bone-density-tests/WO00024>

<http://www.nysopep.org/page.cfm/41>

**Visit our Website:  
[www.palmettofamilymed.com](http://www.palmettofamilymed.com)**

## Bone Density Testing Determining the Health of Your Bones



**Palmetto Family Medicine  
1655 Bernardin Ave., Suite 350**

**Columbia, SC 29204**

**(803)-256-2286**

**Fax (803)-256-1994**

## ***What is a Bone Density Test?***

This is a test to see if you have bone loss and to determine if you have or are at risk for osteoporosis. The test is one of the safest, most accurate ways to measure bone mineral density. The bone density test is called a DEXA (Dual Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry) test.



## ***What is Osteoporosis?***

Osteoporosis is a preventable and treatable bone disorder. It is a condition that causes your body to lose bone at a faster rate than it is replaced. As a result, bones become weaker, more brittle, and more likely to break. This condition is called the “silent disease” because bone loss occurs without symptoms. The good news is osteoporosis can be stopped and even prevented.

## ***Am I at Risk for Osteoporosis?***

You might be at risk for osteoporosis if any of the following apply to you:

- Post-menopausal women
- Women with premature menopause
- Women who undergo surgery to remove the uterus and ovaries
- Men over the age of 70
- Men with low testosterone levels
- Inactive people with poor diets
- Anyone with low body weight (less than 127 pounds)
- Smokers
- Excessive alcohol users (more than 2 drinks per day)
- Steroid use for more than 3 months



## ***What Can Happen if You Have Osteoporosis***

- Bone Fractures
- Height Loss
- Curved Back
- Severe Back Pain

## ***Preventing Osteoporosis***

Prevention of this disease is very important because, although there are treatments for osteoporosis, there is no cure. Prevention is necessary and must include:

- A balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D
- A regular program of weight-bearing exercise
- No smoking and limited alcohol intake
- Medical therapy if needed

