

Argus Orthopaedic Zone

Osteoporosis Quiz

By Thomas J. Haverbush, M.D.
Orthopaedic Surgeon

Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Osteoporosis. Everyone is talking about it, but how much do you know. It has to do with low bone density making bones more fragile (not brittle). To understand Osteoporosis think of your bones as a brick wall. Think of bricks being taken out of the wall slowly, randomly one by one. You know what will eventually happen. Now you have the picture.

True or False?

1. Being overweight reduces the risk of osteoporosis.
2. Osteoporosis is an old ladies disease.
3. Osteoporosis is a normal part of aging.
4. Taking a prescription osteoporosis drug doesn't take the place of Calcium.
5. Only women get osteoporosis.
6. A good bone density test at age 60 means no later osteoporosis risk.

Answers

1. True. Fatty tissue produces estrogen even if you are past menopause - or a man. Weight has a powerful impact on bone mass. Your bones grow stronger to support the weight. The risk to your overall health from being overweight far outweighs the small gain of reduced osteoporosis risk.
2. False. Bone loss in women can begin as early as 25. The lifetime risk for a woman to have an osteoporotic fracture is one in three. The loss of bone is silent and progressive. One brick at a time.
3. False. Not all people will have osteoporosis as they age. By building strong bones through exercise and healthy nutrition when young, maintaining good bone health as an adult and weight bearing exercise, you can greatly minimize the risk of osteoporosis.
4. True. No osteoporosis drug can help bones if you're not getting adequate daily calcium. You need vitamin D also. To use another brick wall image - in the osteoporosis battle, calcium is the brick and the osteoporosis drug is the mortar. The drug helps

hold the bricks together, but without bricks the mortar is useless. Take 1500mg of Calcium a day. No more than 500mg at a time. Getting 1000 international units of vitamin D is a daily goal.

5. False. It is more common among women. One in five men have it also. Women get more fractures, but the risk in men increases with heavy alcohol use.

6. False. A test showing strong bones at age 60 is great. Bone tissue continually changes and remodels. After age 30 you lose slightly more bone than you gain. As you age vitamin D isn't produced as well by the skin and Calcium is not absorbed as well by the small bowel.

Well, there you have it. I hope you got them all right.

There is much more orthopaedic information about all the conditions I treat in the office and hospital on our office teaching website, www.orthopodsurgeon.com, which can take you to Your Orthopaedic Connection. We never close. Open 24 hours!

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free, functional lives.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush