

Advanced Orthopedic Institute at Ingalls

Determine Your Risk for Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis affects approximately 10 million Americans and another 34 million have low bone mass and are at risk for the disease. It is estimated that one of every two women and one of every eight men will experience a fracture related to osteoporosis. Of the 1.5 million osteoporotic fractures per year in the U.S., half are vertebral.

An initial evaluation with your physician can help to determine if you have osteoporosis or may be at risk for osteoporosis. During your visit, your doctor will ask you a variety of questions about your lifestyle and medical history, and will want to know if anyone in your family has suffered from osteoporosis or if they have fractured bones. Based on a comprehensive medical assessment, your doctor may recommend that you have your bone mass measured.

According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF), the only sure way to determine bone density and fracture risk for osteoporosis is to have a bone density or BMD (bone mineral density) test, which is typically performed on the following: all women aged 65 and older regardless of risk factors; younger postmenopausal women with one or more risk factors (other than being white, postmenopausal and female); and postmenopausal women who present with fractures.

Although age and female gender are the most important risk factors, many other factors influence the development and degree of osteoporosis. A diet low in calcium and vitamin D increases the risk of bone loss. Individuals with thin, small or petite body types have less bone, and therefore are at an increased risk. In addition, smoking, excess alcohol, drinking too much caffeine, and lack of exercise all make bone loss more likely.

Ingalls offers DEXA-Based Bone Density Scanning at its Flossmoor and Tinley Park Family Care Centers. A physician referral is required for the test. For more information on the Ingalls Osteoporosis Program, or to request an appointment with a rheumatologist, please call 1.800.221.2199.