

Your Body is Absorbing Your Skeleton – An Osteoporosis Risk

*By Ellen D. Hosafros, Director of Corporate Communications, Corporate Synergies
August 2018*

Yes, you read that headline correctly: your body is constantly absorbing your bones and generating new ones. Here's a sobering bone fact: osteoporosis risk increases happens when bone regeneration can't keep up with the removal of old bone.¹ And that's a problem.

When a person is young, the body makes new bone faster than it breaks down old bone; bone mass increases, usually reaching peak mass in the mid-30s. The higher you build your bone mass when you're young, the more bone you'll have stored in the bank, for less osteoporosis risk as you grow older.²

When a person ages, regeneration continues, but the body begins to lose slightly more bone than it regains. Women can blame estrogen, which drops at menopause. Estrogen reduction triggers bone loss at a faster pace. Although many factors contribute to bone loss, the leading cause is decreased estrogen production.

Osteoporosis, which means "porous bones," is a silent disease—most people don't know they have it until they break a wrist, rib or hip. It's sneaky, too. Over time it causes bones to weaken and become so brittle that a fall in the shower or tumble over a curb can

cause a major fracture. Another bone fact: bending over, coughing or getting hugged can cause fractures.

Osteoporosis is painful, debilitating, and can cause immobility and isolation. And it's common. About half of all women over the age of 50 will fracture a hip, wrist, or bones in the spine during their lifetime. It's a serious public health issue, especially for older people. A bad fracture, like a broken hip, can lead to a downward spiral in physical and mental health.

Bone fact: Hip fractures are associated with a significant risk of death!³

That's because osteoporosis affects a person's ability to function normally. Many people who suffer fractures have significant pain and lose inches in height. They may also lose the ability to dress themselves, stand or even walk. Then they risk complications such as pressure sores, pneumonia and urinary tract infections. Unfortunately, nearly one in five hip fracture patients end up in a nursing home.

Another bone fact: a bone density screening test is recommended for women age 65 and over and for men age 70 and over, to screen for osteoporosis risk.

Your osteoporosis risk depends partly on how much bone mass you achieve when you're young. So if you're a Millennial now, remember that the right diet and adequate exercise today can help you prevent fractures down the road. See [5 Bone Health Tips for a Super Skeleton](#).

¹ [Mayo Clinic](#), "Osteoporosis Overview"

² Ibid.

³ [NCBI.com](#), "The Burden of Bone Disease"

Visit [HealthDiscovery.org](https://www.healthdiscovery.org) for related topics.