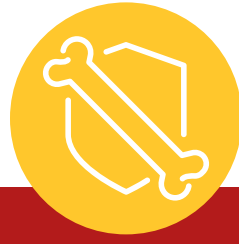# Weill Cornell Medicine

Osteoporosis Awareness:
A Key To Safeguarding Long-Term Health

Osteoporosis is the most common bone disease that older adults face, but many adults may not even know they have it. Take a few moments to learn about osteoporosis and why it's too critical of a health risk to ignore.

Osteoporosis is a disorder that leads to loss of bone density. Less-dense bones break more easily than denser bones do. The disorder can progress to the point that a simple cough can be enough to fracture a fragile bone, such as a rib.
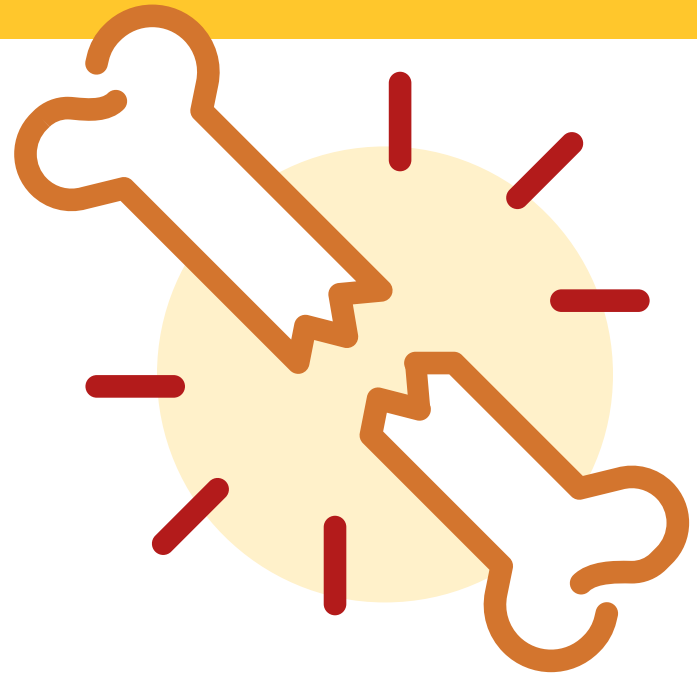
Osteoporosis by the numbers:

4 times

Osteoporosis affects about four times as **many women as men.***

43%

Low bone mass, a precursor of osteoporosis, affects approximately 43% of adults ages 50 and older.*

3 seconds

An osteoporotic fracture occurs about once every three seconds.**

Sources: *CDC, **The International Osteoporosis Foundation

Many people first learn they have osteoporosis only after they experience a bone fracture, since the disorder can progress unnoticed otherwise.

Knowing the risk factors of osteoporosis can help you gauge your risk level. These factors include:

- Being 50 or older

- A problematic thyroid gland

- Having low bone mass

- Being a woman

There is no cure for osteoporosis, but you can work to manage the disorder.

- Take medications that strengthen bone density.

- Avoid medications that reduce bone density.

- If you smoke, make a plan to quit.

- Limit alcohol consumption.

- Eat adequate amounts of vitamin D and calcium.

- Engage in weight-bearing exercises regularly.

**Concerned about developing osteoporosis?
Find a provider to discuss your bone health with:
weillcornell.org/doctors**

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