What is a family health history?
A family health history is a portrait of the shared lives and health of your extended family.

Screening recommendations

... for individuals WITH A FAMILY HISTORY of osteoporosis

.jms TREE
Talk to your health care provider about the appropriate time to begin regular bone density testing, especially if you have additional risk factors.

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Talk to your health care provider to make a personalized plan to maintain your health.

... for individuals WITH NO KNOWN FAMILY HISTORY of osteoporosis

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Women aged 65 and older should have regular bone mineral density tests. Women less than age 65 and men who are at increased risk should also receive regular screening. This includes individuals with diseases that put them at greater risk, individuals who take medications that put them at greater risk, those who have had a fracture after age 50, and those with low body weight.
# Osteoporosis risk factors and what you can do about them

## Things you can change

- **Smoking**: Increases risk
- **Low lifetime calcium intake**: Increases risk
- **Low Vitamin D levels**: Increases risk
- **Low physical activity**: Increases risk
- **Weight**: Underweight leads to greater risk
- **Alcohol**: Drinking more than one drink per day increases risk

## Things you can't change

- **Age**: Risk increases with age
- **Gender**: Females are at greater risk
- **Ethnicity**: Whites and Asians are at greater risk
- **Family history**: A family history of osteoporosis, especially in first-degree relatives (parent, sibling, offspring), increases risk
- **Early menopause**: Menopause younger than 45 years increases risk
- **Being immobile for a long period of time**: Increases risk
- **History of a broken bone after age 50**: Increases risk
- **Taking oral corticosteroids**: Increases risk

## What can you do if you have a family history of osteoporosis?

- Engage in healthy behaviors including regular physical activity and healthy eating
- Do at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity every day, if possible
- Do weight-bearing and strength-building physical activity
- Choose foods rich in calcium
- Get enough Vitamin D
- Reduce your risk of falls by making your home safer
- Talk to your health care provider about your family health history of osteoporosis
- Talk to your health care provider about medicines you are taking that could weaken bones, such as medicine for thyroid problems or arthritis
- Consult your health care provider for regular risk assessment, counseling about behavioral change, and appropriate bone density testing
- Get bone density tests as appropriate

## Sources

- National Osteoporosis Foundation, [www.nof.org](http://www.nof.org)
- National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, [www.niams.nih.gov](http://www.niams.nih.gov)