

### **T-score: the Result of Your BMD Test.**

The result of your BMD test is called a T-score: know your score and what it means. Your T-score compares your bone mass with a population of normal young adult women. The bigger the negative number, the lower your bone mass. For example, a T-score of  $-2.0$  means your bone mass is 20% below normal.

If your T-score is  $-1.5$  or below, you may be a candidate for treatment options that help reverse bone loss. The NOF recommends treatment if your T-score is  $-1.5$  or lower with additional risk factors, and for T-scores of  $-2.0$  or lower without risk factors. Your doctor has information about treatment options for thinning bones; all you have to do is ask.

### **Follow-Up BMD Tests.**

Because bone loss is a natural part of the aging process and tends to accelerate after menopause, it's important to talk with your doctor about monitoring the health of your bones with a BMD test every 2 years. In addition, if you are already taking treatment for thinning bones a BMD test is a good way to measure your progress.

A BMD test might be appropriate one year after beginning certain treatments after a BMD test is done.

*Take your BMD test and ask your doctor for your T-score.*



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## **The Bone Mineral Density Test**



The Bone Mineral Density (BMD) test may be one of the most important tests you'll take. That's because it's the best way to tell if you have thinning bones. Millions of women in the United States have thinning bones. In fact, thinning bones affect over half of all women over 50. What's more, it's a silent disease, with no visible symptoms. That means you could have thinning bones and not even know it.

We recommend that all women over age 64 be tested and women ages 50-64 that have risk factors for osteoporosis be tested.



## Why Women Need a BMD Test

### Why Your Doctor Prescribed a BMD Test.

Your doctor may have scheduled your BMD test for a number of reasons. If you are postmenopausal, you may be at increased risk for bone loss. In fact, one third of a woman's lifetime bone loss can occur in the first 5 years after menopause. In addition, if you recently discontinued hormone therapy (HT), significant bone loss can occur within 12-15 months after you stop HT and can continue thereafter. So it is important to monitor your bone health with a BMD test.

The *National Osteoporosis Foundation* (NOF) lists several risk factors that can contribute to thinning bones or osteoporosis. These include family history, Caucasian (white) descent, thin build, smoking, infrequent exercise, too many daily alcoholic or caffeinated beverages, or too little calcium and vitamin D. Be sure to discuss your risk factors with your doctor.

### The BMD Test. Simple. Quick. Painless.

Compared to many tests women take, the BMD test is a breeze. It's a touchless scan, similar to an x-ray, so it's painless. You don't have to undress, so it's simple. And the test is over in just a few minutes, so it's quick. It may be just a matter of lying on the table for a DEXA test while the arm of the machine scans over your body. It's that easy.

**DEXA tests** measure your hip, spine or total body. These tests are considered the "gold standard" in measuring your bone health. The DEXA test is a highly sensitive scan, and is more comprehensive than the peripheral machines so results are more accurate. This makes the DEXA scan the best way to tell if you have thinning bones. The test is easy to take; you just lie down and the machine scans over your body in just a few minutes.

