

## Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a common bone disease that causes a thinning and weakening of the bones, and can lead to an increased risk of fracture. It can affect people of any age, although women have the greatest risk of developing the disease.

Thin bones are the cause of 1.5 million fractures per year in the United States— hip fractures alone result in 300,000 hospitalizations. It is important to diagnosis osteoporosis early so that steps can be taken to lessen the risk of fracture.



### Noncontrollable Risks

- Female gender
- Small frame
- Advanced age
- Hormone levels
- Genetics
- Predisposing medical conditions

### Controllable Risks

- Cigarette smoking
- Excessive alcohol intake
- Inactive lifestyle
- Excessive caffeine intake
- Lack of weight-bearing exercise
- Drugs (eg, steroids, heparin)
- Poor health
- Low weight
- Calcium-poor diet
- Low vitamin D levels

Osteoporosis affects

**55%**

of Americans aged  
50 or older

## HOW CAN A PHYSICAL THERAPIST HELP?

Your physical therapist can develop a specific treatment program based on your individual needs to help improve your overall bone health, keep your bones healthy, and help you avoid fracture. Your physical therapist may teach you:

- Specific exercises to build bone or decrease the amount of bone loss
- Proper posture
- How to improve your balance so as to reduce your risk of falling
- How to adjust your environment to protect your bone health

Healthy bone is built and maintained through a healthy lifestyle. Your physical therapist will teach specific exercises to meet your particular needs, and to ensure you are neither over- or under-exercising