



Health Connect

May 2014

Editorial

Dear Readers,

Greetings from GHPL!

The Insurance Information Bureau (IIB) is working on a 'Unique Hospital ID Registry' Project which is a compilation of all the hospitals that are currently in the provider network of health insurance. Creation of this analytics database is expected to improve insurer's capability in assessing cost of treatment, medical cost inflation and in detecting fraud. Insurers in India are positive about this development and hope that this will finally provide the much needed respite to system leakages in terms of over-charging and over-treatment.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), osteoporosis is second only to cardiovascular disease as a global healthcare problem. This issue features 'Osteoporosis'; which is characterized by low bone mass and density, leading to an increased risk of fracture. In India, 1 out of 8 males and 1 out of 3 females suffer from Osteoporosis, making India one of the largest affected countries in the world.

Summer's here and that's the time when the maximum cases of food poisoning are reported because bacteria in food multiply faster in hot, humid weather. Daadi Maa Kee Potli contains some easy home remedies to get instant relief from food poisoning.

This issue also carries an interview of Dr. P Gopal Reddy, Senior Orthopedician at Sunshine Hospitals, Hyderabad. We thank him for his valuable inputs.

We hope you continue to find the newsletter interesting and informative. Do write in with your comments and feedback. We would love to hear from you!



RKT Krishnan
Editor, Health Connect and
CEO, Good Health Plan Ltd

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis has been recognized as the third most common disease prevalent in India by WHO (World Health Organization). 33% women and 20% men (above the age of 50) carry the chances of being affected by osteoporosis. It is a progressive disease in which bones become thin, weak, brittle and prone to fracture. It literally means 'porous bones'. Bone is a living tissue that is in a constant state of regeneration, i.e. the body removes old bone (called bone resorption) and replaces it with new bone (bone formation). As people age, the rate of resorption tends to exceed the rate of formation. As a result, bones become thinner and weaker in structure.

Osteoporosis is said to be 'silent' because there are no symptoms. It may come to light only when a bone is broken. In osteoporotic condition, a fracture can occur even after a minor injury, such as a fall. The most common fractures occur at the spine, wrist and hip.

A healthy bone under a microscope looks like a honeycomb while in osteoporotic bone, the holes and spaces in the honeycomb are much bigger. This means the bones have lost density or mass and that the structure of the bone tissue has become abnormal. As a result they also become weaker and more likely to break.

Risk Factors

Various risk factors can lead to bone loss and osteoporosis. The leading cause of osteoporosis in women is the drop in estrogen levels that occurs during menopause.

Factors which cannot be changed	Factors which can be changed
Gender (Women- more prone)	Physical inactivity
Race (Asian descent > risk)	Calcium deficiency
Age (> 50 years - more prone)	Vitamin D deficiency
Genetics (family history > risk)	Smoking (5%-10% extra BMD loss)
Body size - (small / thin > risk)	Excess alcohol
	Rheumatoid arthritis
	Medications (e.g. heparin, prednisone)

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- Osteoporosis
- Daadi Maa Kee Potli – Food Poisoning
- Interview – Dr. P Gopal Reddy, Sunshine Hospitals



Normal bone



Osteoporotic bone

Types of Osteoporosis

Primary osteoporosis

It is the most common type & is more common in women. It develops in women after

Daadi Maa Kee Potli (from the Grandmother's closet)



Home remedies to combat Food Poisoning

Food Poisoning is a condition caused by eating food contaminated by bacteria. The most common symptoms include **nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, fever, headache, body ache, etc.**

Here are the some easy home remedies to get instant relief from food poisoning:

- **Ginger:** A tablespoon of honey with a few drops of ginger juice is effective in combating indigestion and pain / try grinding ginger in buttermilk and consuming it several times a day.
- **Holy Basil (Tulsi):** Strain the juice of a few basil leaves and add it to a tablespoon of honey to get quick relief from vomiting / Mix some chopped basil leaves, sea salt and black pepper to three tablespoons of curd and consume this several times a day to get rid of any cramps or gas problems associated with food poisoning. Basil leaves have anti-bacterial properties that can cure stomach infection.
- **Cumin:** Crush cumin with fenugreek powder & mix it with a glass of warm water or half cup curd/yoghurt and consume it once or twice a day. It relieves abdominal pain and vomiting.
- **Fenugreek seeds and Yoghurt:** Mix 1 teaspoon of fenugreek seeds with 1 tablespoon of yoghurt and gulp it down. Works well on stomach pain, diarrhoea as well as vomiting.
- **Lemon:** Drink lemon juice (without salt)/ drink lemon tea. The acidity of lemon juice is very potent to kill micro organisms and the toxins in the gastrointestinal tract.
- **Bananas:** Mash some bananas and have it with some apple or oats / have a large glass of banana shake or smoothie. Bananas contain potassium which reduce the effects of food poisoning very effectively.
- **Peppermint oil:** Add few drops of peppermint oil in tea to get rid of cramps. It cures ingestion, dyspepsia and colonic muscle spasms too.
- **Water:** During food poisoning large amounts of body fluids is lost through stool. Hence, keep the body hydrated. Increasing water intake helps to flush out toxins, which hastens recovery.



However, it is advised to use this remedy by applying the principles of common sense. Depending on the severity of the condition one MUST approach a medical practitioner. Take Care & Stay Healthy!!!

Osteoporosis... contd...# 1

menopause when the amount of estrogen in the body greatly decreases. This process leads to an increase in the resorption of bone. In men, gradual bone thinning typically starts above 50 years of age, when a man's production of testosterone slows down. This type of Osteoporosis typically develops between the ages of 50 and 70.

Secondary osteoporosis : It refers to osteoporosis that develops as a result of another medical condition, such as hyperparathyroidism, hyperthyroidism or leukemia. It may also occur as a result of taking medicines known to cause bone breakdown. It can occur at any age.

Osteogenesis imperfecta : Osteogenesis imperfecta is a rare form of osteoporosis that is present at birth. It causes bones to break for no apparent reason.

Idiopathic juvenile osteoporosis : Idiopathic juvenile osteoporosis is rarest. It occurs in children between the ages of 8 -14. There is no known cause for this type.

Symptoms & Signs

- Pain in the joints
- Swelling around a joint
- Difficulty in sitting/walking/bending
- A stoop or hunched posture
- Compression fractures
- Fragility fracture¹

Diagnosis

DEXA scan: A DEXA scan is the gold standard to diagnose osteoporosis. The test is quick and painless & is similar to an X-ray, but uses much less radiation. DEXA stands for Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry. This scan measures bone densities and compares them to a normal range. The patient is then given a 'T' score. This score describes the person's bone density compared to the average.

0 or (- 1): normal range bone density

(- 1) to (-2.5): lower bone density. The patient has osteopenia (not osteoporosis)

< (-2.5): the patient has Osteoporosis

Other Tests: Other tests may be used, but they are not usually as accurate as DEXA. They include ultrasound techniques and quantitative computed tomography (QCT) scan.

Prevention and Treatment

Treatment for Osteoporosis may involve both non-medication and medication-based treatments. It involves :

Regular Exercise: Exercise plays a key role in preserving bone density. But avoid any exercise that presents a risk of falling or that can cause fractures. Some of the exercises recommended to reduce chance of a fracture include:

- Weight-bearing exercises - walking, jogging, playing tennis, dancing
- Resistance exercises -Free weights, weight machines, stretch bands
- Balance exercises – Yoga, Tai chi, etc

¹ suffering a fracture after a seemingly innocuous fall (a fall that shouldn't have led to a fracture normally)

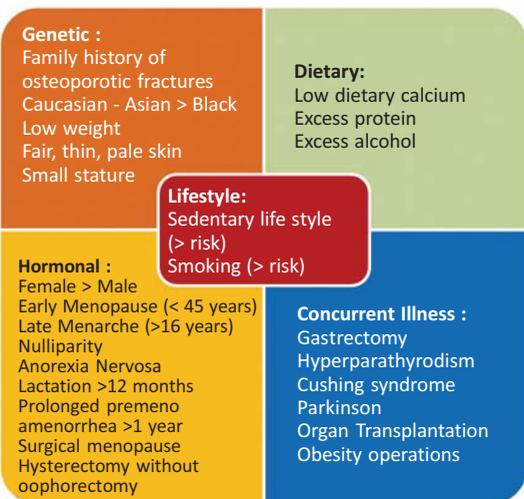
Interview - Dr. P Gopal Reddy M.S. (Ortho.), Sunshine Hospitals, Hyderabad

What is osteoporosis and what causes it?

It's a silent thief- under diagnosed & under treated. Osteoporosis is defined as a skeletal disorder characterized by compromised bone strength pre disposing a person to an increased risk of fracture.



Causes:



What is the incidence of osteoporosis in India?

- 2 million hip fractures every year = 1 in every 17 seconds
- A 50 year old woman has 40-50% life time risk of having fracture
- 40% women over 50 years sustain osteoporotic fractures, $\frac{1}{3}$ of these cases are hip fractures
- In India nearly 80 million women above 50 years of age; 40% post menopausal women develop osteoporosis
- High prevalence - among the highest in the world
- Main cause is lower bone density in Indians
- Fractures occur 10-15 years earlier to other world population
- Men also commonly affected (very less in other world population)
- Main cause of osteoporosis in India is deficiencies in nutritional calcium & Vitamin D3.

What are the screening methods available to detect osteoporosis? When is it recommended to go for screening?

Investigation:

- to diagnose secondary causes: Hemogram,

ESR, S Calcium/Phosphate / Alkaline Phosphate T3, T4, TSH,, Ig Levels electrophoresis for M spike, Bone Marrow biopsy, iliac crest biopsy

- X-ray, Spine, Pelvis, Calcaneus
- PTH
- DEXA (Bone Densitometry)

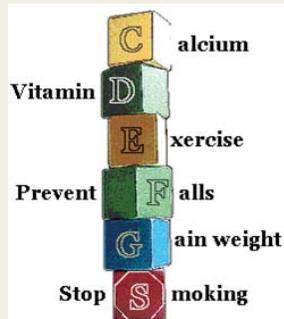
When is it recommended?

> 45 years female; Early Menopause; Late menarche; Repeated Fractures due to Trivial injuries (Low trauma); Thyroid and Parathyroid abnormality patients; Vertebral deformities; Long term steroid therapy

What are the treatment options available? Do these treatment methods have side-effects?

Prevention is primary treatment option i.e.

- Exercise at least 3 hours per week
- Dietary guidelines
 - 1000mg/day calcium before menopause
 - 1500mg/day calcium after menopause
 - 400 iu vitamin D3
- Reduction in salt intake to 2300mg/day
- Adequate calories
- Avoid smoking and excess alcohol



Treatment Protocol

- Dietary Calcium + Vitamin D3 intake
- Weight bearing exercises (30 units/daily)
- Stop smoking & alcohol
- Use of HRT (Hormone replacement surgery) in Postmenopausal women under doctor prescription & supervision

Side Effects

Hot flushes, Sweating, Vaginal dryness, Breast Tenderness, Weight gain, DVT, Depression, Migraine

Bisphosphonates

- Injectables- Cyclic administration
- Oral : Alendronate, Residronate & Etidronate

PTH

Teraperitide —Injectables

Any advice/suggestions to our readers?

Prevention is best: By age 20, the average women has acquired 98% of her skeletal mass. Building strong bones during childhood & adolescence can be the best defense against developing osteoporosis.

“Views expressed herein are purely personal and do not reflect the views of the Hospital”



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Sunlight Exposure: At least 15 minutes of sunlight exposure daily (face, arms & legs) is essential. Sunlight is one of the best ways to get vitamin D, which is important for making the bones strong.

Good Nutrition: A balanced diet contains a variety of vitamins, minerals and other important nutrients which helps in keeping the body healthy. In particular, body needs calcium and vitamin D to keep the bones strong. Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium. Follow a diet that provides the proper amount of calcium and vitamin D.

Nutrient	Daily Requirement	Source
Calcium	1,200-1,500 mg	Milk products, tofu, green leafy vegetables, fish
Vitamin D	400-800 international units	Fortified cereals and milk products, fish, sunlight
Phosphorus	1250 mg (9-18 yrs old) 700 mg (>19 years)	Milk products, whole grains, peas, beans, lentils, nuts
Magnesium	300-750 mg	Green leafy vegetables, whole grains, seeds, nuts, fermented soy products, meat, fish

Using medicines: Drugs used for osteoporosis treatment are:

- Medications that stop bone loss and increase bone strength, such as Bisphosphonates (alendronate, risedronate, ibandronate), raloxifene, calcitonin, etc.
- Medications that increase bone formation such as teriparatide, Fluoride, Strontium, etc.
- Hormone Replacement Therapy

Surgery: There are no surgeries for treating osteoporosis. However, a procedure called Vertebroplasty can be used to treat small fractures in spinal column & also help prevent weak vertebra from becoming fractured. The procedure involves injecting a fast-hardening glue/"bone cement" into the areas that are fractured to make them denser and stronger. A similar procedure, called Kyphoplasty, uses balloons to widen the spaces that need the glue. (The balloons are removed during the procedure.)

Complementary & Alternative Therapies: Complementary therapy is an area of health care that is gaining popularity and many people find such therapies beneficial in offering relief from pain and improving their quality of life. Some of the most commonly used therapies are: Acupuncture, Massage Therapy, Aromatherapy, Homeopathy, Herbal Medicine, Reflexology, Osteopathy, Exercise and Movement therapies like the Alexander Technique, Pilates, Tai chi, Yoga, etc.

Conclusion

Osteoporosis is a condition of low bone mass which predisposes one to fractures. This silently progressive metabolic bone disease is widely prevalent in India in both sexes and occurs at younger age than in western population. Early detection and management of this condition can avoid the risk of fractures and associated morbidity and mortality.

News bits

Fever: second most common disease for medical insurance claim

Source: Hindustantimes.com

Fever has become the second most common disease, after child-birth related admissions, for which people claimed medical insurance in India. The number of Indians getting admitted to hospitals with complains of fever increased by 89% in 2013 compared to 2012, says an in-house study of insurance policies by an insurance company. Overall the number of insurance claimants has increased, especially in the working age group, with claims related to fever, gastroenteritis and respiratory tract infections nearly doubling compared to 2012. "Top claims are no more restricted to critical ailments only with diseases like fever finding a place amongst the top 10 diseases claimed for," said Sanjay Dutta from ICICI Lombard which conducted the survey.

'Unfair' discounts for group health cover under IRDA lens

Source: Digital FC

Taking exception to the practice of subsidising premiums for group health insurance policies, the IRDA said it wanted to ensure that no 'unfair' discounts are offered to groups against individual policyholders. "Insurance is about pooling the expenses of individuals collectively. Some insurers are providing heavy discounts on premiums for group policies offered to corporate customers. We want to ensure that the discounts are given in an 'equitable manner' and that no distortions are happening in the premiums paid for individual policies and group policies. We have asked General Insurance Council for data on premiums and claims of different insurance providers to study the matter," said TS Vijayan, Chairman, IRDA.

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