Controlling Osteoporosis

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Optimizing Osteoporosis Appointments

Osteoporosis is a condition that causes bones to become brittle and weak; associated fractures most commonly occur within the hips, wrists and/or spine.

Bone tissue is constantly being absorbed and replaced. Osteoporosis develops when the new bone being produced cannot keep up with the old bone being removed.

While this particular medical condition can affect both males and females of all races, Asian and Caucasian women, particularly those who are postmenopausal, are at the greatest risk of developing osteoarthritis.

Schedule an appointment with your doctor concerning osteoporosis if you have experienced any of the following:

- Experiencing menopause earlier than what is considered normal
- A decrease in your height
- A bone fracture
- The consumption of any form of corticosteroids for a prolonged period of time
- History of osteoporosis in your family

Tips for Optimizing an Osteoporosis Appointments (General Practitioners, Endocrinologists and/or Rheumatologists)

The following are helpful tips to assist you in preparing for your osteoporosis appointment, as well as what to expect from your doctor:

- Write down any signs or symptoms you may have, although it is possible that you may not have experienced any.
- Write down any recent changes and/or other major stressors in your life.
- Bring all medications, vitamins and/or supplements you take currently, including calcium and Vitamin D; make a list of any other drugs you have been taking

Appointment times spent with doctors, particularly specialists, are often limited. Preparing a list of pertinent questions, in order of priority, can optimize the time you spend with the doctor. In the case of osteoporosis, questions to ask a doctor should include the following:

- How do I know if I have osteoporosis?
- What tests and/or procedures are necessary to confirm an osteoporosis diagnosis?
- What types of treatments will help me?
- What side effects do these various treatments have?

- Is there a generic alternative to the drug being prescribed?
- Are there any natural treatment alternatives I can try as well?
- How can I best manage the other health issues I have in combination with my osteoporosis?
- Are there any specific restrictions to my normal lifestyle activities that I need to know about?
- Will I need to make any dietary changes or take any supplements?
- Are there any types of physical therapy programs that can help with my osteoporosis?
- How can I prevent falls?

In addition to your prepared list of questions, never hesitate to ask other questions if you are unsure of something.

You should also be ready for your doctor to ask you several questions. They may ask you questions such as:

- Have you suffered any broken bones?
- Have you noticed any weight loss?
- What is your diet? Are you consuming adequate amounts of calcium and Vitamin D?
- Are you currently taking any vitamin and/or mineral supplements?
- How frequently do you exercise?
- Have your exercise habits changed?
- Do any of your family members have osteoporosis?
- Has anyone in your family ever suffered from a bone fracture?
- Have you ever had surgery on either your stomach or intestines?
- Do you suffer from bouts of chronic diarrhea?
- Have you ever been given corticosteroid medications (e.g. cortisone and/or prednisone) in the form of injections, pills, creams and/or suppositories?