



Osteoporosis

What is it?

Osteoporosis is a long term condition of the bones in the skeleton. The bones become thinner and less strong so there is a greater risk of them breaking.

The human body lays down bone during early life, reaching a peak in the thirties and forties. After this, bone mass tends to decrease slowly in men. Women receive some protection from this until the menopause. The loss of oestrogen hormones leads to a rapid phase of bone thinning. This is why more women are affected than men.

Osteoporosis can go unnoticed for years. Quite often the first sign that someone has a problem is when he or she breaks one of their bones, in what would have been a minor accident.

Common fracture sites are the wrist, hip and backbone.

How can it be prevented?

Broken bones are not an inevitable part of getting older and osteoporosis can now be largely prevented and treated.

Are you bone idle? Do you avoid exercise at all costs?

Regular weight bearing exercises such as brisk walking, tennis, running, aerobics and dancing will all help to build better bones. These exercises exert a loading impact through the bones.

Try to exercise for 20 minutes at least 3 times a week. Weight bearing exercises should be encouraged in our children and carried on in to later life.

Eat a balanced diet rich in calcium E.g. milk and dairy products, green leafy vegetables, baked beans, bony fish and dried fruit.

Don't drink too much alcohol. Excessive drinking has a damaging effect on bone. Avoid smoking. This will not only benefit you bones but your general health and fitness also.

What if I already have Osteoporosis?

You need to seek medical advice from your GP, who will be able to advise you on suitable medication.

A physiotherapist can advise you on posture and positioning, plus devise an appropriate exercise programme.

At the Wye Physiotherapy practice we can advise on back care and how to lift objects carefully to avoid damaging your spine.

Prevent falls by removing slip mats, loose rugs and trailing flexes.
Remember, prevention is better than cure, and should be started in early life.