News Release
For Immediate Release

Bone Loss in Postmenopausal Women

Osteoporosis, is also called "porous bone," is a disease in which bones become fragile and more likely to fracture. Osteoporosis is common among postmenopausal women. Hip and spine fractures are associated with high morbidity and mortality in this population. Postmenopausal women are at a higher risk of osteoporosis due to the rapid loss of calcium from the bones and the lower levels of estrogen in the blood. Estrogen is a hormone that is important for development and functioning of females of the species. Thus, calcium and estrogen are major factors to build and maintain bone strength in women.

The rapid loss of calcium in postmenopausal women

Calcium is an important electrolyte which is released from the bones in response to the body's needs in blood and muscles. After age 30, bones normally release calcium faster than it's stored. In women, the female hormone estrogen slows calcium loss. After menopause, women lose the protection of estrogen.

The lower levels of estrogen in postmenopausal women

There is a direct relationship between the lack of estrogen after menopause and the development of osteoporosis. After menopause, bone breakdown exceeds the building of new bone. Early menopause (before age 45) and any prolonged periods in which hormone levels are low and menstrual periods are absent or infrequent cause loss of bone mass.

Hormonal Therapy

Estrogen replacement - a hormonal therapy - increase bone density which is a quantitative measurement of the mineral content of bone and used as an indicator of structural strength of the bone. The use of hormonal therapy is approved for the prevention but not for the treatment of osteoporosis. The decision to use it should be based on the patient’s risk factors, because this therapy has several side effects.

Weight-bearing and resistance exercise, limiting alcohol and caffeine intake, smoking cessation, and fall prevention strategies are part of a bone-healthy lifestyle used to manage postmenopausal osteoporosis. Supplements containing calcium and vitamin D which helps calcium absorption are needed because of the rapid loss of calcium in postmenopausal women. The management of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women contains keeping a bone-healthy lifestyle and making recommendations for calcium and vitamin D supplements to prevent or treat the disease.

Contact ______________________, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service ______________ County agent at ______________________, for more information.

Resources:


Menopause and Osteoporosis. 2011.
http://my.clevelandclinic.org/disorders/ menopause/hic_menopause_and_osteoporosis.aspx


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