



— nothing is more important than health



DXA Information

Dundrum - Northwood - Cork City - Kilkenny

What is DXA?

DXA stands for "Dual-Energy X-ray Absorptiometry", which is the use of X-rays to determine bone mass. It is considered the Gold Standard for bone density testing. A DXA scan lasts about 10 minutes. It is a painless procedure.

What is osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a decrease in bone strength which places a person at high risk of breaking or fracturing a bone.

Who is at risk?:

- All women.
- 1 in 2 women is at risk of developing osteoporosis.
- Men and women of an advanced age.
- 1 in 2 women over 50 will develop osteoporosis.
- 1 in 5 men over 50 will develop osteoporosis.
- Those of Caucasian or Asian ethnicity.
- Those with a family history of osteoporosis.
- All post-menopausal women with oestrogen deficiencies.
- Anyone who has suffered from an eating disorder.
- Those using certain medications.
- Cigarette smokers.
- Individuals leading a sedentary lifestyle.
- Any adult who breaks a bone from a trip, fall or otherwise.
- Those who have been diagnosed with osteoporosis by X-ray.

DXA results

The results are given as two different scores - the Z-Score and T-Score.

Z-Score compares your results with others of a similar age, weight, ethnicity and gender. A low Z-Score often means factors other than the natural process of ageing are contributing to loss of bone density.

These factors may include thyroid abnormalities, malnutrition, medication interactions, tobacco use and others.

T-Score gives a comparative picture of your bone density in relation to that of a thirty year old - the age when people normally attain peak bone mass.

This comparison allows your physician to see how much bone loss has occurred.

Bone is living tissue which is constantly renewed and replaced. If the breakdown of bone is greater than the rebuilding, thinning of the bone occurs. Thinning can range from osteopenia to osteoporosis. (in osteopenia bone loss is less than in osteoporosis).

What if my scores are normal?

Even if a DXA scan reveals you have normal bone density, you should not become complacent. Osteoporosis is a progressive and silent disease. A prevention plan should be discussed with your doctor and put in place

What should I do if I have osteopenia?

Research shows that most fractures occur in people with this condition. A discussion with your doctor is recommended and treatment should be considered.

What should I do if I have osteoporosis?

Ask your doctor to explain your results to you. All the causes should be found and addressed. Daily recommended amounts of Calcium, Vitamin D and an appropriate weight bearing exercise are advised. Osteoporosis medication may be recommended. Re-scanning can also be recommended every two years to monitor a patient's response to treatment.

Bone density testing is recommended for:

- All post-menopausal women under age 65 who have additional osteoporosis risk factors.
- All women age 65 and older regardless of additional risk factors.
- Post-menopausal women who sustain a fracture.
- Women who have been on hormone replacement therapy (HRT/ERT) for prolonged periods.
- Men with clinical conditions associated with bone loss.
- Those with X- ray evidence of vertebral fracture.
- Those with very low body weight/anorexia.

T-Score Classification	
Above -1.0	Normal bone mass
Between -1.0 & -2.5	Osteopenia (low bone mass)
Below -2.5	Osteoporosis

Source: World Health Organisation

Any other questions?

If you have any other questions, worries or doubts, please do not hesitate to ask one of our team or contact us prior to your appointment.



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