

How to Treat Bone Loss (Osteopenia and Osteoporosis)?

- The goal of treatment in osteoporosis is to reduce the risk of fractures.
- All patients with osteoporosis and those with osteopenia, at high risk for fractures, will need medications in addition to non-medical options.
- The Fracture assessment tool (FRAX) can help assess your risk for fractures.

Non-medical management

- Adequate calcium intake
- Adequate vitamin D intake
- Weight-bearing or muscle-strengthening exercises
- Stop smoking
- Avoid too much alcohol

Medications

	Medication name	Form	How often?
Bisphosphonates: These medications help prevent further bone loss and decrease risk for fractures	Alendronate (Fosamax)	Tablets	Taken once a week
	Risedronate (Actonel/Atelvia)	Tablets	Taken once a week or once a month
	Ibandronate (Boniva)	Tablets	Taken once a day or once a month
	Zoledronic acid (Reclast)	Intravenous (IV)	Once a year
	Ibandronate (Boniva)	Intravenous (IV)	Once every 3 months
RANKL Inhibitor: A biologic medication that can decrease risk for bone loss and reduce risk for bone fractures	Denosumab (Prolia)	Subcutaneous injection (SC)	Once every 6 months
Anabolic agents: Used to build bone and for those at high risk for fractures or when other treatments fail	Teriparatide (Forteo)	Subcutaneous injection (SC)	Daily injection
	Abaloparatide (Tymlos)	Subcutaneous injection (SC)	Daily injection
Anti-Sclerostin inhibitor: Used to treat those at high risk for fractures or who have failed other medications	Romosozumab (Evenity)	Subcutaneous injection (x2)	Once a month

Reduce risk for falls

Preventing falls is an important step in the management of osteoporosis. The following are some of the things you can do to decrease risk for falls.

- Keep floor free of clutter.
- Use non-slip mats, carpets or area rugs.
- Ensure adequate lighting.
- Installing grab bar in bathrooms and railings on stairways.
- Wear proper shoes with non-slip bottoms.
- Your provider may be able to help evaluate for fall risk and provide necessary assistive devices.

Know your risk factors for bone loss

Understanding the risk factors for bone loss (osteoporosis) and taking measures to overcome them when possible is also important in the treatment of osteoporosis

- Caucasian or Asian ethnicity
- Family history of osteoporosis, bone fractures, stooped posture
- Small-boned or slender habitus
- Diet low in calcium
- Inactive lifestyle
- Cigarette smoking
- Excessive alcohol use (more than 3 alcoholic beverages daily)
- Long-term use of certain medication - steroids, anticancer drugs, thyroid hormones, etc.
- Eating disorders (anorexia, bulimia)

Other information

- It is important to take the medications as prescribed. Do not stop medication without discussing with your provider.
- A drug holiday is where the medication is stopped temporarily and may be an option for those taking bisphosphonates for about 5 years.
- DEXA scans can be done after 2 years to keep track of progress.