November is Osteoporosis Month. Our theme is Capture the Fracture. Since those who have had a fracture are at increased risk for another fracture, Osteoporosis Canada is working to “Capture the Fracture” and help make a patient’s first break their last.

**CAPTURE THE FRACTURE:**
Have Your Height Measured Regularly

It is normal to lose a little height as we get older... but too much height loss can mean that osteoporosis is causing bones to break in your spine, which is making you become shorter. This type of height loss is NOT normal. So how can you tell the difference between normal height loss and height loss due to osteoporosis?

**MEASURE YOUR HEIGHT**
Everyone over 50 years of age should have a height measurement annually.

For those age 50 and over, measuring how tall you are once every year can allow you to keep track of height change. It is best to ask a healthcare provider to measure and record your height for you professionally, rather than doing it yourself. This provides the most accurate measurements.

**KEEP TRACK OF YOUR HEIGHT**

1. When I was a young adult, I was _____ tall.
2. I had a more recent professionally measured height at the age of _____ and I was _____ tall.
3. Today, I am _____ years old and my professionally measured height is _____ tall.
4. Height loss since a recent measurement = (2) - (3) = _____.
   See below if you have lost 2 cm (3/4”) or more.
5. Height loss since young adult = (1) - (3) = _____.
   See below if you have lost 6 cm (2 ½”) or more.

**WARNING SIGNS OF A POSSIBLE SPINE FRACTURE**

- If you have lost 2 cm or more (¾”) in height, as measured by your healthcare provider, you may have a spine fracture.
- If you have lost 6 cm or more (2 ½”) in height since you were a young adult, again, you may have a spine fracture.

Spine fractures are not the only reason people may lose height. Other causes of height loss include poor posture or arthritis. However, if you have lost height then you do need to be checked for the possibility of a broken bone in your back.

Bone density tests are not designed to show bone fractures. To diagnose a bone fracture, what is needed is a regular X-ray of the thoracic and lumbar spine (the upper back and the lower back). Two thirds of spine fractures are painless so you may have had a spine fracture and not even know it. The only warning sign may be your loss of height. Talk to your doctor if you think you have lost some height.

Are you losing height?

Your height as a young adult: ___________________

Your height today: ___________________________

Amount of change: _________________________

Keep this to record future height measurements by a healthcare provider

Date:__________________ Height:_____________

Date:__________________ Height:_____________

With thanks to the Dartmouth Osteoporosis Multidisciplinary Education (DOME) Program
CAPTURE THE FRACTURE:
Give Your Bones Every Advantage

There are factors that are vitally important to your bone health. The checklist below will help you manage your bone health and get the most out of your next bone health check-up with your doctor.

MEDICATIONS AND SUPPLEMENTS
- If you take medication, take your medication properly.
- Take a vitamin D supplement all year round and take the amount that is appropriate for your age group.
- Always take all of your prescription and non-prescription (vitamins and supplements) medications to your medical appointments in their original containers. It is important for your doctor to see the ingredients, dosages, amounts, number of repeats and specific brands of medications that you are taking.

LIFESTYLE
- Don’t smoke.
- Keep your alcohol consumption to an average of fewer than 3 alcoholic beverages per day.
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat a diet rich in calcium.
- Make sure you eat a well-balanced diet with enough protein and fresh fruits and vegetables.

FALLS PREVENTION
- Check your vision. Poor vision, bifocals and cataracts contribute to falls and falls lead to fractures or broken bones.
- Wear proper shoes both inside and outside the home.
- Check your home for possible slip and trip hazards, such as clutter on the floor and stairs, scatter rugs, unravelled electrical cords, slippery bath tubs, etc.
- Tell your doctor if you suffer from dizzy spells, have fallen, are afraid of falling, have poor balance or have difficulty getting up out of a chair. All of these problems may increase your risk of falls and fracture.
- Do not ever climb up onto furniture to reach high places.
- Avoid walking on icy, slippery, or uneven ground. If you have no choice but to walk on dangerous surfaces, do so with extreme caution.

HERE ARE SOME ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR YOUR BONE HEALTH WHEN YOU VISIT YOUR DOCTOR FOR A GENERAL HEALTH CHECK-UP.
- have a weight measurement because if you weigh less than 60 kg (132 lbs) you may need a bone mineral density (BMD) test
- have a height measurement with a comparison to a previous measurement to see if you have lost enough height to consider the possibility of a spine fracture(s) and the need for a spine X-ray
- inform your doctor if you have taken a drug called prednisone (a type of cortisone) within the past year
- inform your doctor about any bones you may have broken in the past, including how old you were and how it happened
- inform your doctor if one of your parents ever broke their hip
- have a discussion with your doctor to assess your fracture risk and to see if you need a BMD test. You may benefit from a fracture risk assessment using the FRAX or CAROC fracture risk assessment tools.
Dancing may not be for you, but Pat Trimble's story of living and dancing well with osteoporosis illustrates how rewarding it can be to find an activity you enjoy.

"In its 46th year, the Surrey Festival of the Dance is one of the largest amateur dance festivals in North America with 10,000 dancers crossing the stage. Encouraged by my husband, my dance partner Dan Minor and I entered the seniors' song and dance duo category. The seniors' category is over 30 — Dan and I are both in our 70s!

We placed first in our category at the Surrey Festival with a mark of 94/100, the highest marks awarded that evening. The most amazing part was the reaction of the adjudicator when making his comments. He told us he was at the age (40ish) where he was wondering if he should continue to dance. After seeing our performance he said we inspired him to continue. It was a truly amazing evening and one that I will never forget.

But life was not always this way. In my early 50s I had sustained several fractures. The final one was a wrist so badly broken that I required two operations and extensive therapy. My diagnosis came at that time when the surgeon told me I had brittle bones. My bone mineral density test results, added to the fact that I had fractured, showed severe osteoporosis. Knowing very little about osteoporosis I felt very sorry for myself but decided I had to find out where to go from there. I discovered Osteoporosis Canada (OC). They were very supportive and provided me with the information I needed. Being a proactive person, it wasn’t long before I was volunteering for OC, facilitating educational classes and ultimately becoming the Chair of Osteoporosis Surrey White Rock for several years. Although I am less active now, I have continued as a member to this day.

My doctor has told me dancing is good for my back as it provides smooth, rhythmical movements. I love to dance so it is easy for me to exercise and it’s also good for my bones. I encourage everyone to find an activity they enjoy. It makes exercise so much more fun.”

CAPTURE THE FRACTURE:
Be Physically Active and Live Well!

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To register & for more information contact
1-800-463-6842 x 286 or nordicpolewalking@osteoporosis.ca
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