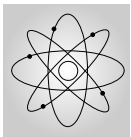


ly, accurately and painlessly measures bone density and the mineral content of bone. Radiation exposure during this procedure is extremely low — one-tenth of the amount in a standard chest X-ray.

Who is a Candidate for a Dexa Scan?

Those most at risk for developing osteoporosis are women over age 50, particularly after menopause when a drop in estrogen accelerates a loss in bone density. Other risk factors include an inadequate calcium intake, low body weight, heredity, physical inactivity, cigarette smoking and excessive use of alcohol.

The Osteoporosis Foundation recommends a bone mineral density test for all women age 65 and older, all postmenopausal women who have suffered a bone fracture and postmenopausal women who have a risk factor for suffering an osteoporosis-related fracture.



For information on the Dexa scan, call the Radiology Department at 732-923-6800.

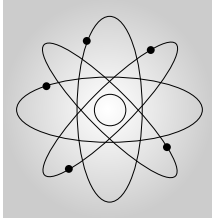
**MONMOUTH
MEDICAL CENTER**
An affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System
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What is a Bone Densitometry Scan?

Answering
Your Questions
About the
Procedure

DEPARTMENT OF
RADIOLOGY
Monmouth
Medical Center

*An affiliate of the
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About Your DEXA Bone Densitometry Scan

Osteoporosis is considered a “silent problem” because it develops over many years, and there usually are no symptoms until a fracture occurs. Determining a person’s risk for osteoporosis is key to combating this skeletal condition, which causes bones to weaken and break more easily.

At Monmouth Medical Center, an advanced imaging procedure — the bone mineral density testing known as a DEXA scan — is allowing this risk assessment to be performed quickly, accurately and with minimal radiation exposure. Monmouth offers this test through the Hologic Bone Densitometer, a state-of-the-art diagnostic tool that detects low bone mass — the major characteristic of osteoporosis — before fractures occur.

The DEXA system scan is considered one of the best tests for predicting future fracture risk by the National Osteoporosis Foundation. It can accurately measure bone mineral density in the spine, hip or wrist (the most common areas for bone density testing), takes only a few minutes and involves a tiny amount of radiation.

Preparing for the Procedure

Unless otherwise instructed by your physician, you may eat normally on the day of the exam, but avoid taking calcium supplements for at least 24 hours before your appointment.

It is recommended that you wear loose, comfortable clothes. A sweatsuit or other sportswear free of metal zippers, buttons or grommets is preferred. Patients who have had certain radiologic procedures performed — including a barium study, radioisotope injection, oral or intravenous contrast material from a CT scan or MRI test — should wait at least seven days before scheduling a DEXA scan.

What to Expect

You will undergo this scan fully clothed, and the 15-minute study does not involve any injections. You will lie comfortably still with your back on a padded table while the DEXA unit scans the areas of your body to be evaluated — usually the fracture-prone spine or hips.

Bone mineral density (BMD) is calculated and compared to normal BMD values, or those of a young person, and also matched for age and sex to confirm or exclude low bone mass. A low BMD score is used by physicians to determine a treatment plan.

A radiologist interprets the scan, and your physician receives a report that consists of the bone density measurements, as well as a comparison of the results against an extensive database of other patients who are the same age and sex.

For those placed on a treatment plan to improve bone density, follow-up testing is performed to measure the patient’s response to therapy.

The Radiation Dose

Bone densitometry — using an advanced technology called dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry — safe-