

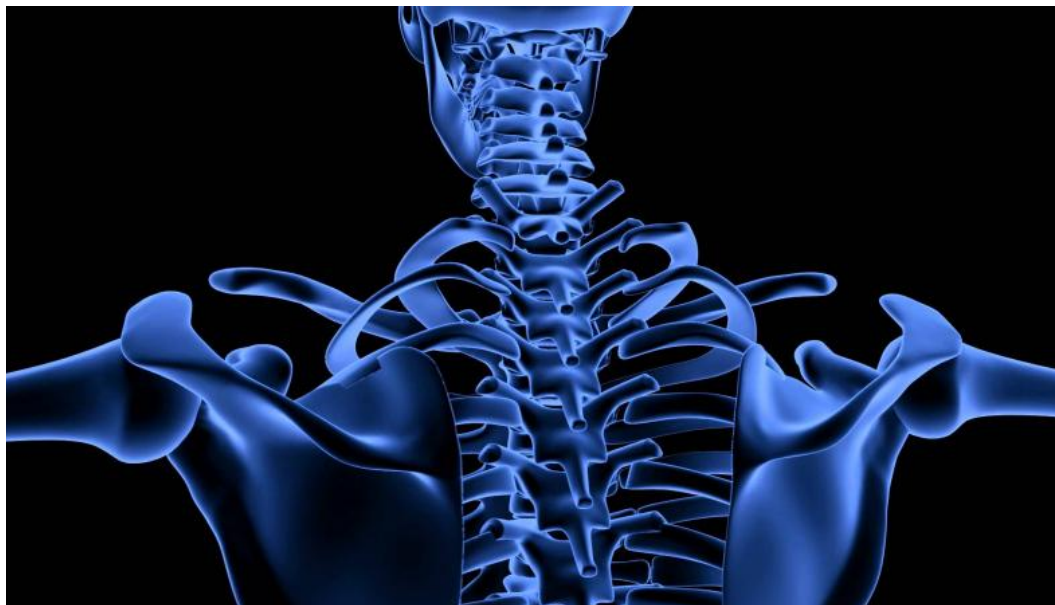
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One in every two middle-aged women suffers from low bone density: expert

DECCAN CHRONICLE. | PRIYADARSHINI PATWA

This means an osteoporotic fracture occurs every 3 seconds with 200 million sufferers being women.



Osteoporosis is a serious health problem for millions of women across the globe.

Mumbai: Women often undergo a number of physiological changes throughout different reproductive stages of their life cycle. These changes are associated with fluctuations in their essential hormone levels. The decline in concentration of estrogen levels causes bones to become brittle and more susceptible to fractures and leads to a condition called osteoporosis.

Levels of estrogen hormones are found to be the highest during the fertile reproductive phase and drop down significantly during menopause.

At present, osteoporosis is a serious health problem for millions of women across the globe.

The data by [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) and the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF), reveal that osteoporosis is second only to cardiovascular disease, as a global healthcare problem. It is alarming to know that The International Osteoporosis foundation indicates that osteoporosis causes more than 8.9 million fractures annually. This means an osteoporotic fracture occurs every 3 seconds with 200 million sufferers being women. As per statistics, one in two women of age 50 usually suffers an osteoporosis related fracture in their lifetime.

There are various forms of osteoporosis but most common one is found in women after menopause, which is commonly known as primary or postmenopausal osteoporosis.

Many reports suggest that rapid bone loss takes place during the immediate five to seven years after menopause. And often women can lose up to 20 per cent of their bone density.



(Photo: Representative image)

Though this condition usually affects a large population of women, there are ways how you can take care of yourself by making healthy choices and supplementing your body with the right nutrients.

We spoke to Dr. Muhammed Majeed, founder and chairman of [Sami Labs](#), who explains about osteoporosis, its causes and what precautions woman should take to keep their bones healthy.

- **What is osteoporosis and its causes?**

Osteoporosis, literally meaning is 'porous bones'. It is a condition of the bone associated with reduction in bone mass and density. Bones become fragile and increase the risk of having a fracture. The primary cause of osteoporosis is aging and being female. Women, especially at the

premenopausal age have particularly low levels of estrogen which leads to imbalance between bone formation and resorption thus leading to weak bones. Other reasons for osteoporosis include a sedentary lifestyle, genetic predisposition, smoking and alcohol consumption.

- **What does it lead to?**

Although a silent disease, pain and loss of height are early symptoms of osteoporosis. It causes reduction in or loss of mobility. The bigger risk though is the occurrence of fractures especially of the wrist, spine, shoulder and hip. Hip fractures can be fatal and needs to be paid immediate attention to. A fractured spine can be extremely painful and also result in disfigurement.

- **Precaution to be taken**

Intake of nutritious and balanced food that is rich in calcium accompanied with an active lifestyle is important. One should also be cautious and prevent falls to protect their brittle / fragile bones.

- **Diet chart to be followed**

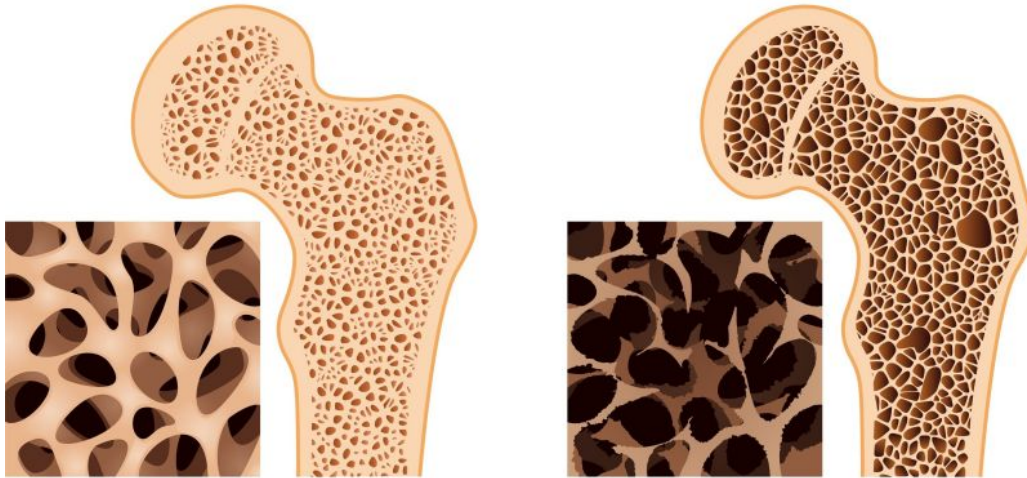
It is generally recommended and believed that a diet rich in calcium supplements is helpful for individuals with

Osteoporosis. However one needs to remember that Calcium is not the only requirement to overcome osteoporosis. The most important risk factor for osteoporosis particularly in women is associated with estrogen deficiency during premenopause resulting in rapid reduction of bone mineral density. Calcium without Estrogen is not beneficial. Phytoestrogen rich diet such as Soya or the use of natural supplements that offer relief in effective dosages are essential for women to maintain bone health.

- **Facts and figures of the women victim to this condition**

It is reported that worldwide, osteoporosis causes more than 8.9 million fractures annually, resulting in an osteoporotic fracture every 3 seconds. Osteoporosis is estimated to affect 200 million women worldwide – of which 1 in 3 women over age 50 will experience osteoporotic fractures. Statistics reveal that in women over 45 years of age, osteoporosis accounts for more days spent in hospital than many other diseases, including diabetes, myocardial infarction and breast cancer.

Osteoporosis



Healthy bone

Osteoporosis

(Photo: Youtube/ Screen grab)

- **Importance of bone health especially for women**

According to a survey conducted in 11 countries by the International Osteoporosis Foundation, denial of personal risk by postmenopausal women, lack of dialogue about osteoporosis with their doctor and restricted access to diagnosis and treatment before the first fracture were the primary reasons attributed to under diagnosis and under treatment of the disease. It is important to create more awareness among women and medical practitioners to conduct regular diagnosis and prevent the progress of the disease condition. Nutritious fruits and vegetables, protein rich diet and natural supplements to support bone health should be made a part of a woman's everyday diet. A healthy woman is a direct reflection of her healthy family.

- **6 ways to improve bone health**

1. Nutritious diet rich in calcium, vitamins, proteins and phytoestrogens.
2. An active lifestyle with regular exercise.
3. Use of natural supplements during premenopause.
4. A healthy lifestyle with no smoking or excessive intake of alcohol.
5. Optimal exposure to sunlight to improve Vitamin D levels which help increase Calcium absorption.
6. Regular diagnosis after the age of 40 to prevent bone degeneration.

- **Why women are falling victim to this condition?**

Women have several stages of their reproductive life cycle which is associated with a number of hormonal changes. During the premenopausal stage, there is significant reduction in estrogen levels which in turn affects the balance between bone formation and resorption since estrogen is actively involved in this mechanism. In addition, women also lead a stressed lifestyle trying to balance both personal and

professional fronts without paying much attention to their nutrition. All of these factors lead to bone degeneration or weaker and fragile bones.

- **Factors contributing to bone loss and how to deal with it quickly**

To maintain bone health, it is essential to supplement the bone with calcium, vitamins and phytoestrogens. Natural supplements that have been clinically tested to be safe and effective can be an ideal option to help maintain bone health. Quality ingredients from natural sources in most bioavailable forms are safe solutions to manage this condition.

- **What is the correct diet for bone health/Natural supplements?**

Phytonutrients are natural bioactive compounds present abundantly in the plant world. Examples of a few class of compounds include anti-oxidants, phyto-sterols (plant sterols), non-digestible (non-starch) carbohydrates such as tannins, pectin, cellulose, hemi-cellulose, mucilage, natural acids, enzymes and lecithin. Through different mechanisms, phytonutrients are reported to help slow down the aging process and may help protect against a host of illnesses and diseases.

A unique class of phytoextracts that find application in osteoporosis include phytoestrogens. Phytoestrogens like those present in Soy Isoflavones and Red Clover extract are the dietary estrogens which play a role in maintaining or improving skeletal health since they are structurally similar to the female hormone estradiol.