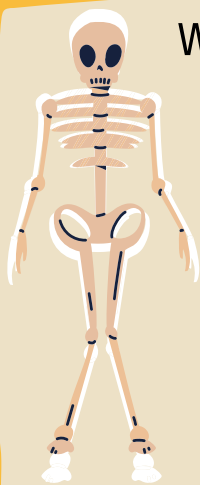




香港紅十字會  
HONG KONG RED CROSS

# Understanding Osteoporosis



World Osteoporosis Day takes place every year on October 20, launching a year-long campaign dedicated to raising global awareness of osteoporosis. **In serious cases of osteoporosis, bones may break from sneezing or minor bumps.** Studies suggest that approximately one in two women and up to one in four men age 50 and older will break a bone due to osteoporosis. Thus, we need to learn about what osteoporosis is and its preventive measures.



## What is osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a degenerative disease that is characterized by **decreased bone mass**, leading to weak and brittle bones that have **higher risk of fractures**.

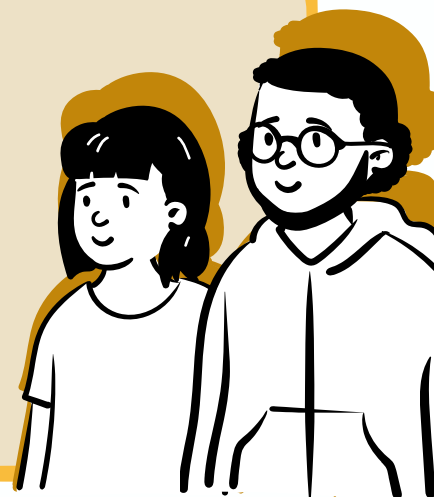
## Situation in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, 50% of women suffer from osteoporosis after menopause, and the cases of fractures caused by this are also on the rise.



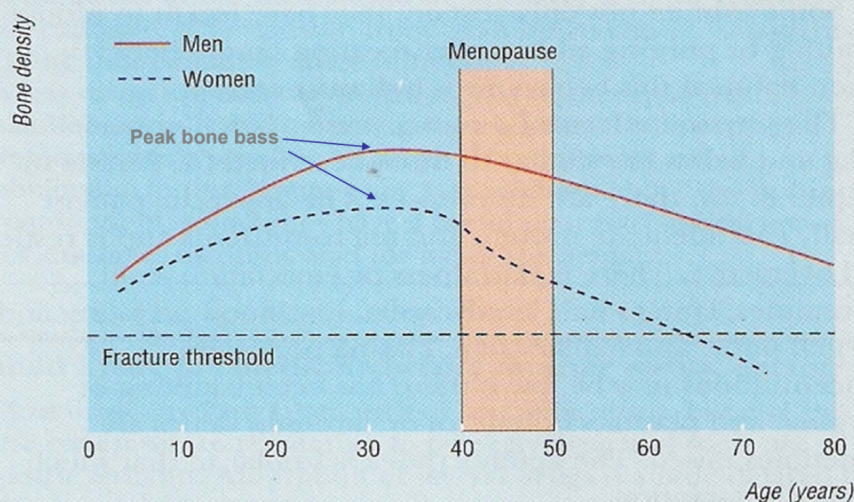
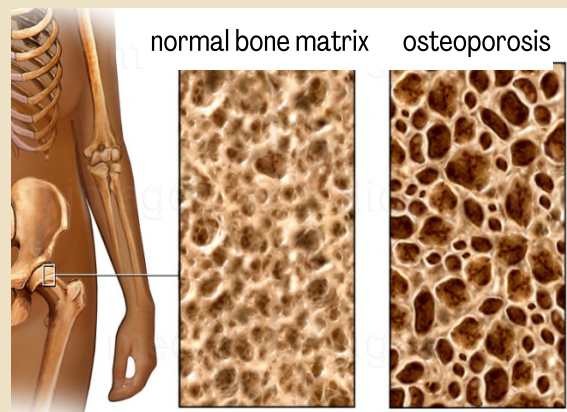
## It is NOT limited to women and elderly

A study showed that over 22% of men aged 65 and over suffered osteoporosis. The greatest gains in bone size and strength occur in adolescence. The more bone mass we “bank” in childhood and adolescence, the better protected we are from the bone loss. Building healthy bones by **adopting healthy nutritional and lifestyle habits in childhood** is important to help prevent osteoporosis and fractures later in life.



# Aging and bone loss

As a result of the aging process, the bone deteriorates in composition, structure and function. Bone mass increases rapidly in children and teenagers. After the early 20s this process slows, and most people reach their peak bone mass by age 30. As people age, bone mass is lost faster than it's created. Later in life, menopause in women significantly increases bone resorption due to low levels of estrogens



## Prevention methods

- 1 Engage in an active lifestyle and do **weight-bearing exercise** such as walking upstairs
- 2 Get enough **calcium and vitamin D** and eat a well balanced diet
- 3 Get enough vitamin D through **exposure to sunlight**
- 4 Undergo regular **bone density checks** after menopause
- 5 Quit smoking and reduce alcohol intake



## Benefits of brisk walking

Walking is the simplest, safest and one of the most effective forms of exercise which can benefit your health. You are recommended to **carry out at least 15 - 20 minutes of brisk walking everyday**. It has been shown to give long-term health benefits if we do it regularly and keep it as a lifelong exercise program. It lowers the risk of osteoporosis and strengthens muscles.

