



# Osteoporosis Facts

*Tricia Fleming, University of Kansas Dietetic Intern,  
Tammy Beason, MS, RD, Nutrition Education Specialist,  
Candance Gabel, MS, RD, LD Associate State Nutrition Specialist, Family Nutrition Education Program*

## What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a disease in which the bones become fragile and are more likely to break.

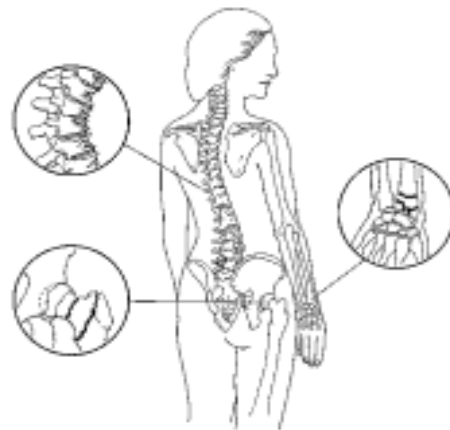
## What causes Osteoporosis?

Scientists do not know the answer to this question. They think, while you are young your body makes new bones faster than it breaks down old bones. As you get older this process slows down and you start losing bone faster than you can make it. In order to avoid this, you must have obtained a strong bone density from childhood and adolescence. You also must have an adequate intake of calcium and Vitamin D.

## Who is at risk?

There are several risk factors:

- being female
- thin and/or small frame
- advanced age
- family history of osteoporosis
- post-menopause
- anorexia nervosa or bulimia
- use of certain medications such as corticosteroids
- low testosterone levels in men
- an inactive lifestyle
- cigarette smoking
- excessive use of alcohol
- being Asian, or Caucasian



## How can they detect Osteoporosis?

There are no symptoms to this disease. Many people do not know they have it until they break a bone. There is a test called the Bone Density Test that can determine if you have this disease. If you have any of the following risk factors a Bone Density Test is recommended:

- Take medications that cause Osteoporosis
- Type I Diabetes, Liver disease or Kidney disease
- Family history of Osteoporosis
- Early menopause
- Post-menopausal and over 50 years of age with at least one risk factor
- Post-menopausal and over 65 and have never had a test