

# Summary of USPSTF Draft Recommendation

## Screening for Osteoporosis to Prevent Fractures

June 2024



### What is this draft recommendation about?

The recommendation focuses on screening for osteoporosis to prevent fractures. **Osteoporosis** is a condition that causes bones to become thinner and weaker, resulting in fragile bones that break more easily. **Fragility (osteoporotic) fractures** are breaks that result from a minor fall or injury that would not have caused a break in a normal, healthy bone.

Screening for osteoporosis is done by measuring bone density and can also include assessing the likelihood of fracture risk at certain places in the body (e.g., hip, femoral neck (the narrowest point in the hip), or spine).



### What does the USPSTF recommend?



The USPSTF recommends screening for osteoporosis to prevent osteoporotic fractures in women 65 years and older.



The USPSTF recommends screening for osteoporosis in postmenopausal women younger than 65 years who are at increased risk for an osteoporotic fracture, as estimated by clinical risk assessment.



The USPSTF concludes that the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of screening for osteoporosis to prevent osteoporotic fractures in men.

#### ***So, what does that mean?***

All women 65 years and older should be screened for osteoporosis. Women younger than 65 who have gone through menopause, have at least one risk factor, and are found to be at increased risk using a risk assessment tool should also be screened. There is not enough evidence to decide whether or not men should be screened for osteoporosis to prevent fractures. Anyone who has concerns about bone health should talk to their clinician.



### Who is this draft recommendation for?

This recommendation is for adults who do not have a history of prior fractures or health conditions that could lead to weakened bones (e.g., cancer, metabolic bone diseases, hyperthyroidism) or take medicines that could cause bones to become more fragile (e.g., oral steroids).

## Screening for Osteoporosis to Prevent Fractures



### Why is this draft recommendation and topic important?

- Osteoporosis usually has no signs or symptoms.
- Fragility fractures are often the first sign of osteoporosis and can result in serious disability, chronic pain, loss of independence, and death.
- Screening for osteoporosis is an effective way to prevent some fractures.
- Some risk assessment tools may not accurately estimate risk and can result in underestimation or underdiagnosis in Asian, Black, and Hispanic populations. Healthcare professionals should consider this issue, as well as the presence of additional risk factors not included in risk assessment tools, when making screening and treatment decisions.



### What are the benefits?

Screening for osteoporosis allows healthcare professionals to identify the disease earlier, before a fracture occurs. They can then offer patients treatments to help prevent fractures.



### What are the harms?

There are few harms related to screening.



### Where can I learn more?

[Osteoporosis](#) (National Institutes of Health)

[Osteoporosis](#) (MedlinePlus)

[Overview of Osteoporosis](#) (National Institutes of Health)

[Bone Health and Osteoporosis: What It Means to You](#) (National Institutes of Health)



### How can I comment?

Visit the [USPSTF website](#) to read the full draft recommendation and submit a comment.



The Task Force welcomes comments on this draft recommendation.



Comments must be received between June 11, 2024, and July 8, 2024.



All comments will be considered as the Task Force finalizes the recommendation.