

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Issues Draft Recommendation Statement on Screening for Osteoporosis to Prevent Fractures

Task Force found that screening for osteoporosis can prevent fractures in women age 65 years and older and in those younger than 65 who are at increased risk

WASHINGTON, D.C. – November 7, 2017 – The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) today posted a draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review on screening for osteoporosis to prevent fractures. Based on its review of the evidence, the Task Force recommends screening for osteoporosis to prevent fractures in women age 65 years and older. This is a **B recommendation**.

The Task Force also recommends screening for osteoporosis to prevent fractures in women younger than age 65 years who have been through menopause and are at increased risk for osteoporosis. This is a **B recommendation**.

The Task Force found that there is not enough evidence to determine if men should be screened for osteoporosis to prevent fractures. This is an **I statement** (insufficient evidence) and not a recommendation for or against the practice.

Osteoporosis is a condition where bones become weak and can break or fracture more easily. These fractures, also called osteoporotic or fragility fractures, can result from a minor fall or injury that typically would not cause a break in normal, healthy bones. These fractures can lead to serious disability, loss of independence, and decreased quality of life, and can increase a person's chances of dying.

"Without screening, most women won't know that they have osteoporosis until they have a fracture. The Task Force found that screening for osteoporosis can help clinicians identify and treat the disease early to help prevent fractures," says Task Force member Alex H. Krist, M.D., M.P.H.

This draft recommendation statement is consistent with the prior final recommendation statement. "Women younger than age 65 at increased risk and all women older than age 65 should be screened for osteoporosis," says Task Force member Chien-Wen Tseng, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.E.E.

The Task Force's draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review have been posted for public comment on the Task Force Web site at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org. Comments can be submitted from November 7, 2017 to December 4, 2017 at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/tfcomment.htm.

The Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based

Grades in this recommendation:

B: Recommended.

I: The balance of benefits and harms cannot be determined.

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recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

Dr. Krist is a professor of family medicine and population health at Virginia Commonwealth University and an active clinician and teacher at the Fairfax Family Practice Residency. He is codirector of the Virginia Ambulatory Care Outcomes Research Network and director of community-engaged research at the Center for Clinical and Translational Research.

Dr. Tseng is the Hawaii Medical Service Association endowed chair in health services and quality research, an associate professor, and the associate research director in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine. She is also a physician investigator with the nonprofit Pacific Health Research and Education Institute.

Contact: USPSTF Media Coordinator at Newsroom@USPSTF.net / (202) 572-2044