

Quakerbridge Radiology Defines the Standard of Care for Bone Health Testing Through Vertebral Fracture Assessment

If you are reading this you are probably wondering what is vertebral fracture assessment and why do I need this. Our bones are forever changing in density (loss of bone mass). As we get older our bones can lose their strength and stability due to many factors such as nutritional, estrogen, disease, smoking, lack of exercise, medication, age and many other factors. You might not know if you have osteoporosis. Low bone mass can afflict both men and women and early detection is key to prevention.

The identification of vertebral fracture is very important in the diagnosis of osteoporosis and many of these vertebral fractures go undiagnosed. Quakerbridge Radiology Associates announces that spring 2009 we will have the means to streamline testing for vertebral fractures. Our new dual x-ray absorptiometry known as DEXA will include the Hologic vertebral fracture assessment (VFA) in high definition with instant vertebral assessment (IVA-HD). This new feature dramatically improves the detection of vertebral fractures. IVA-HD doubles the resolution of previously available techniques with a safe, low dose, single energy x-ray image. The VFA is completed in about 10 seconds and there is very low dose of radiation. The study is easy and safe for patients.

The new technology allows the patient to simultaneously receive a bone mineral density (BMD) assessment. The BMD assessment is used to diagnose osteoporosis, a condition in both men and women in which the bones suffer a gradual loss of calcium causing them to become less dense and more susceptible to fractures and breaks.

The x-ray images pass through the patient's lumbar spine, occasionally a forearm, and one hip. The left hip is usually examined because it allows for earlier detection

of osteoporosis since it is not the dominant hip for most people. The exam is painless and can be completed in 15 minutes.

A few common myths about osteoporosis:

Fiction: Only women need to worry about osteoporosis.

FACT: 80% of all osteoporosis patients are women. 20% of cases are men and since the disease affects 10 million people and is growing, that means 2 million men in the U.S. have osteoporosis. Men have a greater risk of developing a fracture related to osteoporosis than prostate cancer.

Fiction: If you are on medication for osteoporosis, you don't need to worry about getting enough calcium and vitamin D

FACT: Medication can help prevent bone loss, but they don't give you the raw materials -- calcium and phosphorus -- that make up bone minerals. If the body doesn't have that, the drugs can't help it." Be sure to eat a diet rich in calcium, even if you are taking medication, and ask your physician about adding the Vertebral Fracture Assessment to your next Bone Density Exam (DEXA).

Fact: Vertebral fractures can lead to back pain, loss of height, immobility... and even reduced pulmonary function. Their impact on quality of life can be profound. Vertebral fractures can significantly impact on activities of daily living. Talk with your physician about Vertebral Fracture Assessment (VFA) today.

Most insurance companies, including Medicare, will pay for this additional scan if the patient meets select criteria:

1. Loss of height of 1" or greater
2. History of any fracture in a patient over the age of 50
3. Osteoporosis
4. Hyperparathyroidism
5. Symptomatic Menopause

Your Image. Your Choice. Talk to Your Doctor!

For more information on other Quakerbridge Radiology services, visit the Web site at qbradiology.com or to schedule an appointment call 609-890-0033.