

SEE YOUR DOCTOR

Nationwide Survey Shows Many Women With Osteoporosis Are Lacking Information To Properly Care For Their Bones

(NAPSA)—According to a nationwide survey conducted by Harris Interactive of over 1,000 women with postmenopausal osteoporosis, more than half said they are not knowledgeable about osteoporosis despite being diagnosed with this potentially serious disease. The survey also found that women who considered themselves knowledgeable about postmenopausal osteoporosis were the most likely to take good care of their bone health, putting a higher priority on physical activity and diet, as well as taking doctor-prescribed medications.

Osteoporosis, a disease characterized by low bone mass and deterioration of bone structure resulting in reduced bone strength and increased risk of fracture, affects more than 8 million women in the United States. Often referred to as the “silent disease,” most women don’t even know that they have osteoporosis until a sudden bump or fall causes a fracture.

To help women learn the essentials of proper bone health and the steps they can take to help avoid fractures, Pam Peeke, M.D., internationally renowned women’s health expert and author of the best-seller “Fit to Live,” has joined forces with the American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA) to launch Strong to the Bone, a nationwide awareness campaign sponsored by Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation.

“Today’s women age 55 and older are looking forward to the next stage of life and expect to stay active into the future,” says Dr. Peeke. “To help achieve their long-term life goals, women need to



Dr. Pam Peeke, women’s health expert, encourages women to assess their osteoporosis risks.

know their osteoporosis risk and the bone-healthy behaviors they can incorporate into their daily life to help prevent fractures.”

Although there are effective prescription treatment options for postmenopausal osteoporosis, the nationwide survey found that about one in three respondents (30 percent) had not currently been prescribed medication despite being diagnosed with the condition, and 57 percent did not consistently do weight-bearing exercise, such as walking or dancing, which helps to keep bones strong.

“As a physician and a women’s health expert, I think it is very important that women seek appropriate treatment for their postmenopausal osteoporosis in order to help avoid future fractures,” said Dr. Peeke. “There are postmenopausal osteoporosis treatments that can help manage the condition effectively. For example, Reclast® (zoledronic acid) Injection, along with daily calcium and vitamin D supplements, is the first

and only once-yearly prescription treatment for postmenopausal osteoporosis that offers women an alternative to daily, weekly or monthly treatments.”

Dr. Peeke encourages women to assess their personal osteoporosis risk at www.strongtothebone.com and to share the results with their doctors, who can help them develop a personalized bone health plan. The Web site also offers additional information on osteoporosis, as well as helpful bone health tips.

Tips For Strong Bones

- Get enough calcium. Dairy products (low-fat or nonfat milk, yogurt, cheese), calcium-enriched products, broccoli, leafy green vegetables and almonds are all excellent sources of calcium. Multivitamins or a calcium supplement are other sources to consider.
- Vitamin D is a definite. Your body needs vitamin D to absorb calcium. Fortified milk products, liver, fatty fish and egg yolks are excellent sources. Also consider taking a multivitamin or vitamin D supplement.
- Exercise is key. Put your bones to work with weight-bearing and resistance exercises. Think walking, dancing and playing tennis.
- Break the habit. Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption weaken your bones.
- Protect yourself from falls. Have regular vision checkups, check home lighting, wear shoes with nonslip or rubber soles and consider balance exercises such as yoga or tai chi.
- Talk to your healthcare provider. Learn about bone health and find out if you are at risk for osteoporosis. You may be asked to take a bone mineral density (BMD) test, which can be used to assess the need for treatment. Remember to consult your doctor before beginning any exercise regimen.

For additional tips, visit www.strongtothebone.com.



Note To Editors: Important Safety Information:

Patients should not take Reclast if they’re on Zometa® (zoledronic acid) Injection as it contains the same ingredient, if they have low blood calcium, kidney problems, are allergic to Reclast or Zometa or they’re pregnant, plan to become pregnant or nursing.

It’s important for patients to drink fluids before getting Reclast to help prevent kidney problems. The most common side effects are flulike symptoms, fever, muscle or joint pain and headache. Patients should tell their doctor if they have dental problems because rarely, problems with the jaw have been reported with Reclast. Patients should discuss all medicines they’re taking, including prescription and nonprescription, vitamins and herbal supplements. Patients should contact their doctor if they develop severe bone, joint or muscle pain, numbness, tingling or muscle spasms.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

About the Survey

The survey was conducted by Harris Interactive and commissioned by Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation in partnership with the American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA), a leading national advocate for women’s health made up of more than 3,500 female physicians. The survey was conducted online between February 28 and March 10, 2008. Of the 3,563 invitations delivered, a total of 1,539 responses were received, resulting in a 43% participation rate. Among those who responded, 1,010 completed surveys were received from respondents who met the screening criteria of being a U.S. postmenopausal woman aged 55+ diagnosed with osteoporosis. The data have been weighted to reflect age, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online. The data include women from urban (29 percent), suburban (39 percent) and rural (32 percent) locales as well as from every region of the country.