BONE DENSITY TEST

Dual-energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DEXA) is considered the most advanced and reliable tool for assessing bone mineral density. Bone mineral density tests are used to diagnose bone loss and osteoporosis, predict your risk of future bone fractures, and monitor how well osteoporosis medicine is working.

Guidelines from leading health care organizations recommend the DEXA screening for osteoporosis at age 65 for women and at age 70 for men with no known risk factors.

Your doctor may also request a DEXA exam if you have significant risk factors for osteoporosis and/or bone fracture. Risk factors include:

- A strong family history of osteoporosis
- A thin, small frame
- Caucasian or Asian ancestry
- Females who are postmenopausal
- Males who have low testosterone levels
- Use of steroids or medication for convulsions
- Heavy smoker
- Heavy use of caffeine or alcohol
- Insufficient exercise, calcium, or vitamin D

What happens during a DEXA scan?
Bone density screening is extremely safe, painless, and takes less than 20 minutes. DEXA uses low-dose X-rays. No special preparations are needed before having a DEXA scan.

You will be asked to lie on a table while a mechanical arm-like device passes over your body. You may be able to remain fully clothed, depending on the area of your body being scanned. You will, however, need to remove clothing that has metal fasteners, such as zips, hooks or buckles. In some cases, you may need to wear a gown. You may resume normal activities immediately after the test.

A DEXA scan compares your bone density with the bone density expected for a young healthy adult or a healthy adult of your own age, gender and ethnicity.

The difference between your measurement and that of a young healthy adult is known as a T score, and the difference between your measurement and that of someone of the same age is known as a Z score. Your doctor will explain your results to you.

For more information or to make an appointment call 888.624.1850.