

Why do I need this test?

Bone density scanning, also called a DEXA scan uses X-Ray to measure bone mineral density. Most often the hips, spine, and forearm are tested. The most common reasons for a bone density scan are:

- To diagnose osteoporosis
- When performed over time, bone density tests can show the rate of bone loss in those who don't receive treatment, and the rate of bone gained in those who do receive treatment for osteoporosis
- To assess the risk for developing fractures.

What happens before the test?

- On the day of the exam, you may eat normally.
- You should NOT take calcium supplements for at least 24 hours before your exam.
- You should avoid wearing any metal that day, including jeans with metal rivets, pants with thick elastic waist bands, and bras with underwire and/or metal hooks.

T-Score classifications for bone density established by the World Health Organization (WHO) are:

-1 and above	Normal/Healthy
Between -1 and -2.5	Loss of bone density/Osteopenia
-2.5 or lower	Osteoporosis



What happens during the test?

Plan to be at the clinic for up to an hour. Scanning generally takes 10 to 30 minutes to complete.

- You may be asked to change into a patient gown.
- You will lie flat on a padded X-Ray table. for a portion of the exam.
- To assess the spine, your legs are supported on a padded box to flatten the pelvis and lower (lumbar) spine. To assess the hip, your feet are placed in a brace that rotates the hips inward. You must hold very still to reduce the possibility of blurred images.

What happens after the test?

There are no restrictions or limitations after your test, unless otherwise instructed by your doctor. You may resume your usual diet, fluids, medications, and activity. Your provider will have your results. Your results will be indicated by a value called a T-score. This score allows you and your provider to compare your results with what it should have been at its peak. A T-score value of 0.0 indicates your bone density is equal to the average bone density of a young, healthy adult.

FRAX tool can help guide treatment decisions. This tool is used to predict your 10-year risk of breaking major bones such as hips, spine, or wrist. Your provider may recommend you consider taking osteoporosis medication in addition to other lifestyle changes.