

## ***Healthy Bone Habits You Don't Want to Break***

- ◆ According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, osteoporosis is a major health threat for approximately 44 million Americans, including 1.5 million Michigan residents. Ten million people in the United States are estimated to already have the disease, and 34 million more have low bone mass, placing them at increased risk for osteoporosis.
- ◆ The *U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Bone Health and Osteoporosis* states that, by 2020, 50 percent of all Americans over age 50 will be at increased risk for fractures from osteoporosis and low bone mass if no immediate steps are taken.
- ◆ One in two women and one in four men over the age of 50 will have an osteoporosis-related fracture during their remaining lifetime.
- ◆ Only one in four women between the ages of 45 and 75 will ever talk to their doctor about osteoporosis, despite the fact that advances in medications and simple lifestyle changes can help them take care of their bones.
- ◆ Statistics from the National Osteoporosis Foundation show that, on average, 24 percent of hip fracture patients age 50 and older die in the year following their fracture.
- ◆ While osteoporosis is most common among white women, several other factors can also contribute, including age, a family history of the disease, having a small frame or low weight, inadequate consumption of calcium and vitamin D and lack of physical activity.
- ◆ Women over 65 years old and anyone with multiple risk factors should receive a Bone Mineral Density (BMD) test to measure bone density in areas of the body most susceptible to fractures, including the spine and hip. This painless test can detect osteoporosis before a fracture occurs and predict chances for future fractures.
- ◆ According to the recent American Academy of Pediatrics Report on Bone Health, eating nutrient-rich foods such as low-fat and fat-free milk, yogurt or reduced-fat cheese during childhood and adolescence may help reduce the risk of osteoporosis and fractures later in life.
- ◆ Adding weight-bearing, strength-training and cardiovascular activities are easy ways to maintain overall health and reduce the chance for developing osteoporosis. Increased physical activity can help preserve bone mass, in addition to improving strength, coordination and balance.