Hannah F. Pietsch

Office: 832-667-5749

Cell: 859-948-7733

HFPietsch@HoustonMethodist.org

# Men also at risk for osteoporosis

# *Men are not regularly screened for the condition common in women*

Houston – (May 5, 2016) – Screening women for osteoporosis is now routine, however, when it comes to men, most are never screened and therefore suffer the consequences of the disease. In the U.S., nearly 1.5 million men over 65 have osteoporosis, and another 3.5 million men are at risk for developing the disease.

“Women have a screening safety net,” said Mary Ruppe, M.D., a Houston Methodist endocrinologist. “Between their primary care physician and OB-GYN, women will begin bone density screenings at the appropriate age. Men are less likely to have routine primary care checkups and don’t receive preventative care similar to what is provided for women.”

 The American College of Physicians recommends that men be assessed yearly for osteoporosis risk factors starting at age 50. The primary risk factor for men is family history, such as women in their family with osteoporosis or parents who suffered a hip fracture. Other factors that can raise a man’s risk of osteoporosis are prescription steroid use, gastrointestinal disease, use of prostate cancer drugs, and alcohol abuse. At age 70, The Endocrine Society recommends that all men begin routine bone density screenings as the risk for osteoporosis increases at this age.

Ruppe said the osteoporosis treatment options for men are similar to those available for women. There are several approved medications that alter the cycle of bone formation and loss to help preserve bone strength. She said the key is diagnosing the condition so treatment can begin.

“Each year, approximately 80,000 men will suffer a hip fracture, and studies have shown they have a higher mortality rate after a hip fracture than women of the same age,” Ruppe said. “Such data underscores the importance of routine osteoporosis screening for men.”

Ruppe said that if a man is diagnosed with osteoporosis, his physician can begin treatment and order additional screenings to identify causes of low bone density that can cause other medical issues, such as Vitamin D deficiency or low testosterone levels.

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