

Women not only face certain unique health issues, but some health issues are also different for them than for men. Pregnancy, menopause, and conditions of the female organs present their own challenges. Women can have a healthy pregnancy if they get early and regular prenatal care, and they should receive recommended screenings for breast cancer, cervical cancer, and bone density.

Many health problems affect both men and women, but they can affect women differently such as:

- Women are more likely to die following a heart attack than men
- Women are more likely to show signs of depression and anxiety than men
- The effects of sexually transmitted diseases can be more serious in women
- Osteoarthritis affects more women than men
- Women are more likely to have urinary tract problems



Worldwide Facts and Figures

Based on the WHO's statistics, the following results were revealed:

- Every day in 2017, approximately 810 women died from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.
- Between 2000 and 2017, the maternal mortality ratio dropped by about 38% worldwide.
- 94% of all maternal deaths occur in low and lower-middle-income countries.
- About 40% of pregnant women are anaemic.
- Skilled care before, during and after childbirth can save the lives of women and new-borns.

A Woman's Guide to Health Issues

Women face the following health concerns:

- 1 Heart disease**
Heart diseases are the first cause of death among women.
- 2 Stroke**
Approximately 55,000 women are affected by stroke every year, and the symptoms vary depending on the underlying cause.
- 3 Diabetes**
Women are four times more likely to suffer from diabetes complications than men. Other diabetes-related complications such as blindness, kidney disease, and depression are also more prevalent in women.
- 4 Urinary tract infections**
A urinary tract infection (UTI) occurs when bacteria get into the urethra and multiply. Due to a shorter urethra in women, they are more common, and need to be examined if they become a recurring problem.
- 5 Cervical cancer**
Cervical cancer used to be one of the most common causes of death for women. Pap smears have made it possible to detect precancerous cells and eliminate them, thus reducing cervical cancer incidence.
- 6 Breast cancer**
Monthly self-examinations can help you identify any changes in the breasts. This is in addition to following a yearly scheduled mammogram, which should start at age 40.

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a disease of the bones, resulting in weak and breakable bones.

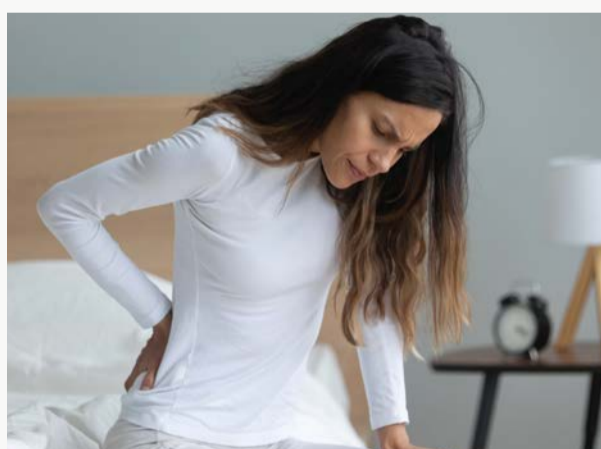
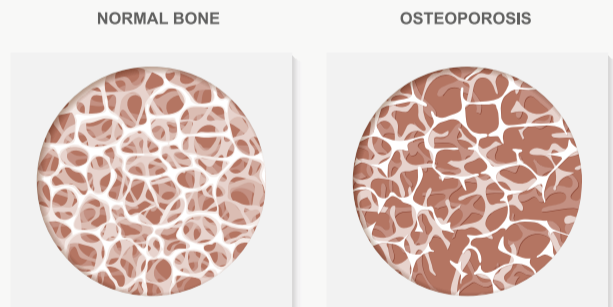
Known as a "silent disease", a person may experience bone loss for many years due to osteoporosis without any symptoms until they break a bone. Broken bones from osteoporosis cause serious health problems and disability in older women.

Are some women at higher risk for osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is commonly encountered in older women with no underlying risk factors. However, this does not necessarily mean that it is attributed only to old age.

The common risk factors include:

- Are past menopause
- Have a small, thin body (low BMI)
- Have a family history of osteoporosis
- Mexican, American, or white women
- Low dietary calcium intake
- Vitamin D deficiency
- Being inactive
- Have not gotten a menstrual period for three months in a row (called amenorrhea)
- Have an eating disorder. Eating disorders, especially anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa, can weaken the bones. Anorexia can also lead to amenorrhea.
- Smoking
- Have a health problem that raises the risk of getting osteoporosis.
- Take certain medicines to treat long-term health problems, such as arthritis, asthma, lupus, or thyroid disease.



Osteoporosis symptoms include:

- More prone for bone fractures
- Height loss
- Back pain
- Hunched posture

A bone density test for osteoporosis is suggested for:

- Women aged 65 or older
- Women who are younger than 65 but have risk factors for osteoporosis

Prevention

One of the best ways to prevent weak bones is to work on building strong ones. Building strong bones during childhood and the teen years is important to help prevent osteoporosis later:

- Get enough calcium and vitamin D each day.
- Get active. Choose weight-bearing physical activities like running or dancing to build and strengthen your bones.
- Avoid smoking as it raises the risk of breaking bones.
- Consult your doctor about taking medicine to prevent bone loss.



Remember

Take these simple steps for a longer and healthier life. Prevention is the best cure for disease, helping you extend your life, and live more happily. However, with the impact of a hectic daily routine, healthy habits often take a back seat to chores, work, or busy schedules.

- Get active
- Eat a balanced diet
- Take your prescribed vitamins
- Do a monthly breast self-examination
- Visit your doctor regularly for check-ups and screening exams
- Manage your stress
- Practice mindfulness
- Make sure you get enough sleep
- Manage your risk
- Know your family health history