

Osteoporosis management in women who had a fracture

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Member questions

What is osteoporosis?	Osteoporosis is a disease that affects our bones. It makes our bones weak and more likely to break due to low bone density. Bone density refers to how tightly packed the minerals and proteins are in our bones. Osteoporosis is called a “silent disease” because you may not even know you have it until you have broken a bone.
How do I know if I have osteoporosis?	You can get a DEXA scan. DEXA stands for dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry. DEXA is a type of medical imaging test. It uses very low levels of X-rays, less than a dental X-ray, to measure bone density. DEXA scans are a covered benefit with your Premera Blue Cross insurance plan.
What are risk factors for osteoporosis?	Risk factors for osteoporosis include getting older, having a past fracture, smoking cigarettes, or having a parent who had a hip fracture. Other risk factors include low body weight, heavy alcohol use, and rheumatoid arthritis.
What if I already know I have osteoporosis?	It’s still important to keep an eye on your bone density. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting a DEXA scan to check your bone density, it helps your provider to understand how likely you are to break a bone.• This information will help your provider find ways to prevent future bone breaks.

Should I get a DEXA scan (osteoporosis screening)?	<p>The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recommends you have a DEXA scan to identify or treat osteoporosis if you meet either of these requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have broken a bone after the age of 50. • You are a woman who has gone through menopause and are under age 65 with risk factors.
What happens during a DEXA scan?	DEXA scans are quick and painless. You lie on a table and the arm of a machine passes over your hip and spine.
What happens after the test?	After this test, you and your provider should discuss the results and decide if any follow-up actions are needed.
What if I have already healed from my fracture?	This is a good time to understand your risk for future bone breaks. Your provider will use information from your DEXA scan to predict your risk and work with you on ways to keep your bones healthy.
Is there a copay for this screening?	No, there is no copay. The screening is provided at no cost.
Will this affect my coverage with Premera Blue Cross?	No. This screening and your results won't affect your health plan coverage, premium rates, or out-of-pocket costs.

Premera Blue Cross is an HMO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Premera Blue Cross depends on contract renewal.