

Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

Osteoporosis ("porous bone") is a disease characterized by decreased bone mass and weakened bone tissue, leading to an increased risk of bone fractures. Any bone is susceptible, though fractures most often occur at the hip, spine, and wrist.

Eight million women in the United States are estimated to have osteoporosis, and another 22 million are at risk of osteoporosis due to low bone mass.¹ Though osteoporosis can strike at any age, the risk is highest in postmenopausal women due to loss of estrogen. One in two women over the age of 50 will have an osteoporosis-related fracture in her lifetime.² Women can help prevent or delay the onset of osteoporosis through diet, exercise, and use of medications when appropriate.

The 2004 California Women's Health Survey (CWHS) asked 4,557 women ages 18 and older if a doctor had talked with them about osteoporosis prevention and also, when the last time their height was measured by a doctor. There were 2,252 women ages 45 and older asked if they had been told by a doctor that they have osteoporosis.

Overall, 14.0 percent of women ages 45 and older reported having been told by a doctor

or other healthcare provider that they had osteoporosis. The number of women reporting osteoporosis increased with age. Women ages 65 and older were most likely to have been told they had osteoporosis (see graph). White women were most likely and Asian/Other women were least likely to have been told they had osteoporosis (see graph).

Among adult women ages 18 and older, 39.0 percent reported having discussed osteoporosis prevention with their doctor. White women were the most likely to have talked with their doctor about osteoporosis (48.0 percent), followed by Asian/Other (39.0 percent), Black/African American (29.0 percent), and Hispanic (25.0 percent). Women ages 45 and older were more likely than younger women to have discussed osteoporosis prevention with their doctor (53.0 percent versus 28.0 percent).

Only 55.0 percent of adult women had their height checked by a healthcare provider in the last year. Fewer women ages 45.0 and older than younger women reported having their height checked in the last year (53.0 percent versus 57.0 percent). Women diagnosed with osteoporosis were more likely to have had their height checked in the last year (65.0 percent).

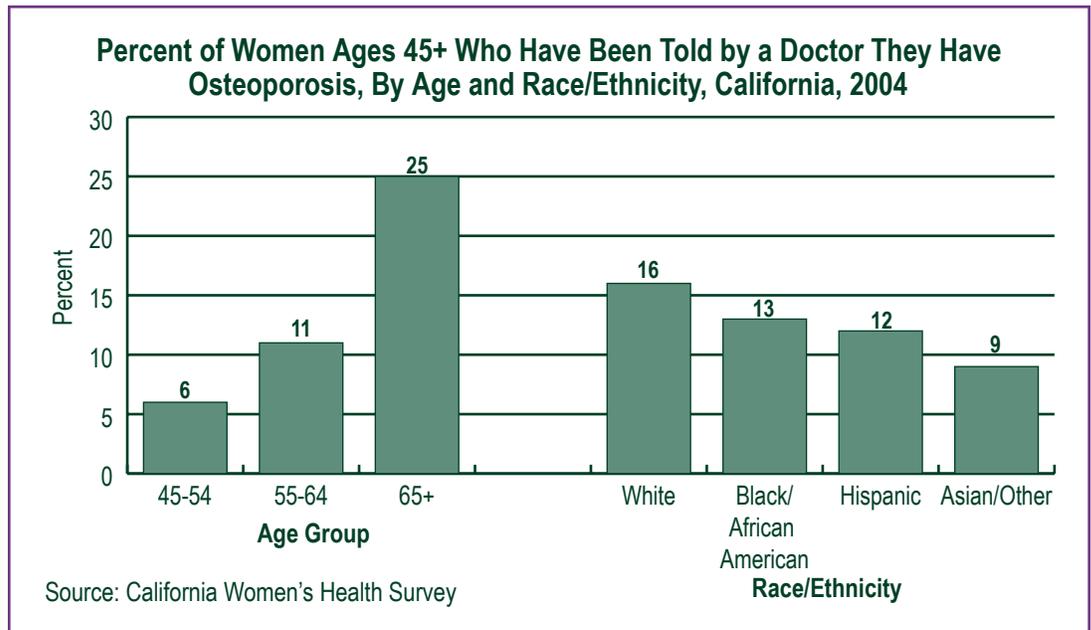
Osteoporosis Prevalence and Awareness, California, 2004

California Department
of Health Services Chronic
Disease Control Branch

Public Health Message
Osteoporosis is a treatable and preventable disease. Discussion of osteoporosis with a health provider leads to early diagnosis and treatment. Less than one-third of women surveyed under age 45 have talked to their doctor about osteoporosis prevention. Efforts to raise awareness about osteoporosis prevention among younger women are necessary.

**Osteoporosis
Prevalence and
Awareness,
California, 2004**

California Department
of Health Services Chronic
Disease Control Branch



- 1 National Osteoporosis Foundation. America's Bone Health: The State of Osteoporosis and Low Bone Mass in Our Nation. Washington, DC: National Osteoporosis Foundation, 2002.
- 2 NIH Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases National Resource Center-- Fast Facts on Osteoporosis. Available at www.osteoporosis.org/inetdocs/r106pi.pdf.

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