What can your doctor do for your bones?

TESTS
- A Bone Mineral Density Scan will test the level of your osteoporosis.
- A Blood Test will see if you have enough Vitamin D.

MEDICINES
Your doctor may prescribe medicines such as Alendronate (Fosamax/Plus) or Risedronate (Actonel/Combi), to treat your osteoporosis and reduce your risk of breaking another bone. These medicines are taken once a week. It is important to follow the instructions carefully and not to stop taking the medicine unless your doctor tells you to, or you have a side effect.
Side effects are rare but may include indigestion or heartburn, a rash or bone pain. Very rarely jaw bone pain may be a problem. Talk to your doctor if any of these effects occur.
Your doctor may also recommend calcium and Vitamin D supplements which are taken daily. Other medicines and injections are available. Ask your doctor about the different treatment options.

Some useful contacts.

BONE SPECIALIST
Your GP can refer you to a rheumatologist or to an endocrinologist who specialises in osteoporosis.

FALLS RISK ASSESSMENT AND ADVICE
Your GP can refer you to a physiotherapist or to specialised falls prevention programs.

OSTEOPOROSIS AUSTRALIA
For general information about osteoporosis
Phone: 1800 242 141
Website: www.osteoporosis.org.au

Please direct any enquiries to Dr John Van Der Kallen, Rankin Park Centre 49214830.

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If you have broken a bone as a result of a simple trip or fall, it may mean that you have osteoporosis.

Healthy bones should not normally break unless there has been major trauma. Osteoporosis is a common condition where bones become thin and break more easily.

YOU can do a lot for your bone health. You can also reduce the risk of falling and having another break.

YOUR DOCTOR can also do tests and prescribe medicines that will strengthen your bones.

This brochure provides general information about osteoporosis treatment. For more specific information see your doctor.

What should you do now?

You should make an appointment with your General Practitioner or local medical centre within the next few weeks to tell them you have had a broken bone.

Please take this information with you.

How can you strengthen your bones?

Here are some further tips to help you strengthen your bones:

- **Get plenty of calcium.** Calcium is important for bone health. Dairy foods are the main source of calcium. **Eat at least 3 serves of dairy food every day** (1 serve = 1 glass of milk, or 1 small tub of yogurt, or one slice of cheese). You can also take a calcium supplement.

- **Get out in the sun.** Sunlight on the skin makes Vitamin D which is also important for bone health. Have sunlight exposure (without sunscreen) to arms and legs for at least **20 minutes, three times a week.** Avoid the hours of 10am to 2pm (or 11am to 3pm during daylight saving). You can also take a Vitamin D supplement.

- **Avoid smoking.** As well as being bad for your general health, smoking weakens your bones.

- **Limit your alcohol intake.** Alcohol also weakens your bones.

- **Get some regular weight bearing exercise** to keep your bones and muscles strong. Try to walk for 30 minutes at least three times a week, and be as active as possible in your daily activities.

How can you stop having another fall?

Following are some simple steps you can take to reduce your risk of falling:

- **Improve your strength and balance.** Ask for a referral to learn strength and balance exercises.

- **Check your Eyesight.** You are more likely to fall if your eyesight is poor. Have your eyes checked and update your glasses if you need to. Wear your glasses.

- **Check your shoes.** Wear shoes that:
  - fit well
  - are comfortable
  - have non-slip soles; and have low heels.

- **Check your medicines.** Some medicines may make you more likely to fall. Ask your doctor to review your medicines.

- **Check your home.** Make sure your home is safe and free from hazards, such as:
  - unsecured rugs
  - stray electrical or phone cords
  - general clutter

Ask your doctor for more information