

## Simple Steps to Treat Bone “Thinning”



**A**s we age, both men and women experience changes in bone composition. One such change, thinning (loss of mineral content) of the bones—typically in your lumbar spine and hip—tends to be experienced more frequently and to a greater degree by women, particularly following menopause when estrogen levels drop.

### Types of Bone Thinning

Your treatment will depend, in part, on the severity of your bone thinning. Those with osteoporosis more likely will require prescription medication, a calcium-rich diet, supplements and a supportive exercise regimen. Those whose bone densitometry shows osteopenia—a milder form of bone thinning—will less likely be treated with prescription medication.

### Building Strong Bones

Common medications you may be prescribed include Fosamax, Miacalcin, Evista or Boniva. Calcium-rich foods, such as dairy products, broccoli and fortified juices and foods, should be consumed regularly, along with a calcium supplement. Vitamin D, important for calcium absorption, can be obtained through sun exposure, vitamin D-rich foods or supplements.

We can work with you to find an exercise program to safeguard bone health and complement nutritional advice and medications prescribed by your doctor. Some possible recommendations include

- **Exercises to increase bone mass** (often weightbearing sequences such as walking or squats) **and increase muscle strength;**
- **Guidance and education on body balance and posture; and**
- **Identification of risks at home or activities that may increase susceptibility to falls.**

As part of a doctor-guided program, physical therapy to strengthen your muscles and bone density, improve flexibility and handle any related pain can help treat bone thinning, whether the loss is mild or severe.