



# I See Your Skeleton



## Bone mineral density test is one of the best ways to assess your risk of fracture.

Bone mineral density (BMD) is a measure of the amount of minerals, such as calcium, contained in a certain volume or area of bone. A BMD test helps you and your doctor know your fracture risk. BMD testing of the hip and knee region should be done for people with spinal cord injury to know if they have osteoporosis, low bone mass or high fracture risk.

### Did you know?



BMD tends to decrease quite rapidly in the first 2 years after a spinal cord injury (SCI), and then continues to drop at a slower rate as you age.

## 1. How is BMD assessed? - It depends on where you live!

### North America Dual-Energy X-ray Absorptiometry

#### Body parts for Measurement

- 1 Hip
- 2 Knee region
  - distal femur
  - proximal tibia

### Europe

### Peripheral Quantitative Computed Tomography (pQCT) Scan

#### Body parts for Measurement

- 1 Thigh above the knee
- 2 Shank of shin bone
- 3 Ankle

## 2. How can I get a BMD test?

Your doctor or a nurse practitioner can order a BMD test for you. Plan to review your result together.



## 3. When should I have a BMD test?

Get a BMD test as soon as possible after SCI, and then every 1-2 years, thereafter. Routine testing tells you and your doctor if your BMD is increasing, decreasing or staying the same and fracture risk.



## 4. What do the results tell me and my doctor?

Whether or not you have low bone mass or osteoporosis



Your future risk of fracture



Loss or gain in BMD



If your treatment is working



## 5. I have osteoporosis. Is standing, walking or other exercise safe for me?

There is no BMD value below which you should not exercise. Your healthcare provider can assess and discuss your fracture risk before you consider participating in physical therapy or exercise.

### To Do List

### Bone Density Testing

- Get BMD testing of your hip and knee regions every 1-2 years.
- Consult with your physician or therapist before starting weight-bearing activities.



## Get Your Knee Region Bone Density Test On A Regular Basis To Monitor Your Bone Health And Your Fracture Risk.

### Learn More

SCI Fragments:  
www.scifragments.ca



The information contained in these handouts & podcast are not intended to replace medical advice. Readers are advised to discuss their individual circumstances with their doctor & rehab care team.

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www.cravenlab.ca

