

## MAKING SENSE OF OSTEOPOROSIS

*StoneTree Naturopathic Clinic, Collingwood, ON*

Statistics tell us that 25% of people who break a hip will be dead within a year. It's a scary stat, and it makes osteoporosis—a condition of bone degeneration and low bone mass—a big deal.

It also leads many to turn to bisphosphonate meds like Didrocal, Fosamax and Actonel to keep their bones strong.

In the news this month, though, osteoporosis drugs are being linked to “atypical femur fractures”—fractures with no trauma required. This can create a lot of confusion because we're told that these drugs are meant to *decrease* fractures, not cause them—what gives?

The mystery lies in how bones work. Bone is an active tissue that constantly repairs itself through our entire life. Two types of cells in the bone do this work: *osteoclasts*, or bone-builders, and *osteoblasts*, the bone “taker-downers” that remove older, weaker structure to make way for newer, stronger stuff.

Here's the important part: *osteoporosis medications work by stopping the breakdown action of the osteoblasts*. That means your bones will indeed stay thicker because the old weak stuff isn't being broken down. **But thicker doesn't always mean better**. The job of improving *quality* and preventing fractures falls to you.

You can do that in three ways:

### **Don't fall**

This seems overly simplistic but most falls as we age are caused by decreased flexibility and strength, and can be prevented. Maintain these two things to greatly decrease your risk.

### **Stimulate bone building**

Try weight bearing exercise and yoga. Sorry—there's still no magic pill for exercise!

### **Build Better Bones**

Give your osteoclasts what they need to make quality bones. A good diet and supplements can give your body things like calcium, magnesium, strontium, manganese, vitamin D and vitamin K to name a few.

*To learn more about osteoporosis, book a complimentary 15-minute visit with a naturopathic doctor in our Collingwood, ON clinic by calling 705-444-5331, or emailing us at [feelbetter@stonetreeclinic.com](mailto:feelbetter@stonetreeclinic.com)  
[www.StoneTreeClinic.com](http://www.StoneTreeClinic.com)*