FACT SHEET:
Bone Mineral Density Scan
(Bone Densitometry or DEXA Scan)

high st XRAY

What is a bone mineral density (BMD) scan?

Bone mineral densitometry is a scan which uses low energy X-rays to measure the density of your bones. It is used to diagnose osteoporosis and assess your fracture risk. It is also used to monitor your bone density, especially if you are on treatment for osteoporosis.

The usual regions scanned are your lower spine and hips, although on occasions other sites such as the forearm may need to be scanned.

Why would my Doctor refer me to have this scan?

You might be referred for this scan if you have:

- A medical condition that could weaken your bones
- You might have had recent fractures after a minor injury or fall that in other persons would not have broken this bone
- An X-ray image or picture taken for another reason has shown that the vertebrae in your spine are weakened and losing height

The most common cause for this is osteoporosis. This is a common condition and increases with age. It is a major cause of weak bones, causing fractures resulting from minor injury, which is preventable with treatment.

What preparation is required?

There is no special preparation required.
Where possible, please wear clothing with no metallic objects such as zips or metal buttons which can affect the scan. If required, we will ask you to change into a gown before scanning.
Please bring along any previous bone densitometry results that you have so we can assess for any changes in your bone density.

What happens during a BMD scan?

On arrival for your scan, your height and weight will be measured. This allows the computer to generate information about your bone density.

An important aspect of the scan is to position the hips and spine in the same way each time you are scanned, so that results are accurate and comparable at each visit.

How long will the scan take?

The scanning time is about 5 minutes. The total duration for a bone mineral densitometry appointment, however, is about 30 minutes. This is because we need to obtain some medical history from you before the scan and your height and weight will also be taken by your Radiographer. This information is necessary for the results to be calculated accurately.

What is the radiation dose?

The radiation dose from a bone mineral densitometry scan is about one tenth of a dose from a chest X-ray.

Follow Up

The Radiologist will provide a written report to your referring doctor within 48 hours after the scan.

Please make a follow up appointment with them to discuss the results.

A: 149 - 151 High St, Bendigo VIC 3550 T: 5441 9999
E: info@highstxray.com.au W: highstxray.com.au