

Bone Densitometry

Measurement of bone mass by densitometry has become central to the diagnosis of osteoporosis and instituting preventative treatment. Currently it is estimated that less than 5% of patients at risk for osteoporotic fractures of the spine and hip are diagnosed and treated. With increased availability of accurate bone density testing, diagnosis of osteoporosis early will allow for earlier treatment, resulting in reduced fracture risk.

For those patients who had previously undergone Quantitative Computed Tomography (QCT) determination of bone mineral density (patients with severe scoliosis, severe degenerative arthritis of the spine, bilateral prosthetic hips, prior lumbar surgery or severe atherosclerotic calcifications), evaluation of the forearm, in place of either a hip or spine densitometry determination can be performed, yielding additional important information.

DEXA scanning is a simple, painless test, performed while lying down on the table of the unit. Determinations are made in the lumbar spine, hip and occasionally the forearm. The length of the exam is 10-15 minutes.

Indications to refer patients for bone densitometry testing include:

- Diagnose osteoporosis-even in its earliest stages
- Estimate risk of future fractures
- Monitor efficacy of drug therapy on bone density



Preparation:

No calcium supplements, day of exam

Wear clothing without metallic fasteners or decorations, if you do not wish to change into a hospital gown

