SMOKING AND OSTEOPOROSIS

Osteoporosis is a disease that causes bones to become thin, weak and break easily. Anyone can develop osteoporosis, but it is more common in older women. Studies have shown that about half of all women and a quarter of men older than 50 break a bone due to osteoporosis. There are multiple risk factors that can lead to osteoporosis and one of them is smoking.

Cigarette smoking is the cause of many well-known problems such as heart disease, lung and esophageal cancer, and chronic lung disease. A condition that is commonly overlooked associated with smoking is osteoporosis, which can lead to bone fractures.

Many studies have shown a direct relationship between tobacco use and decreased bone density. Most studies on the effects of smoking suggest that smoking increases the risk of having a fracture:

- **The longer you smoke and the more cigarettes you consume, the greater your risk of fracture in old age.**

- **The recovery process is longer and the ability to heal is decreased in individuals who smoke.**

- **Smoking during youth when bones are still growing can prevent a person from reaching their peak bone mass.**

- **Increased bone loss has been found in older women and men who smoke.**

- **Women who smoke often produce less estrogen (a sex hormone) and tend to experience menopause earlier, which may lead to increased bone loss.**

- **A healthy body weight and regular physical activity are important to build strong bones in youth and keep them strong in adulthood. People who smoke tend to be thinner and exercise less than people who don't smoke.**

- **To reduce your chances of a painful spine or hip fracture or to improve the healing of a current fracture, it is important to quit smoking.**

Quitting smoking appears to reduce the risk of low bone mass and fractures. However, it may take several years to lower a former smoker's risk. The best thing you can do for your bones is quit smoking.

STAGES OF OSTEOPOROSIS:

NORMAL BONE   **OSTEOPOROSIS**   **SEVERE OSTEOPOROSIS**

optim spine