

Who interprets the results?

A consultant rheumatologist, a specialist radiographer or a consultant who works with X-rays will interpret the results. Treatment is given by the doctor or consultant who referred you. Another scan may be performed after treatment (usually two to three years). It is important that your follow-up scan is performed on the same DXA machine as the original scan.

More information

Please ask for information on any aspect of DXA bone mineral densitometry or information on Osteoporosis.

Bone density appointment information

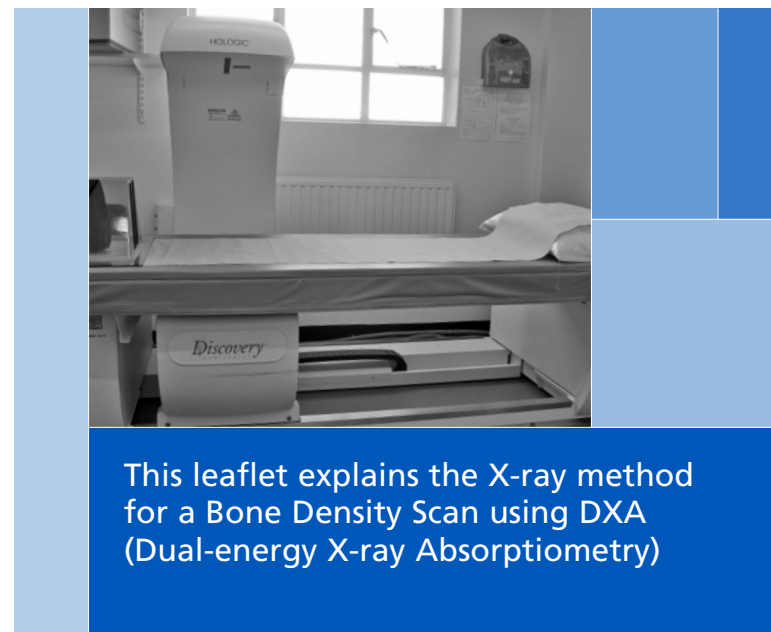
James Paget University Hospital
X-ray department appointments
01493 453464 or 01493 452456

Information can also be found at

National Osteoporosis Society
Camerton
Bath BA2 0PJ
01761 471771 or 0845 1303076
Helpline: 0845 4500230 or 01761 472721
Website: www.nos.org.uk
E-mail: info@nos.org.uk



Bone Density Scan



This leaflet explains the X-ray method for a Bone Density Scan using DXA (Dual-energy X-ray Absorptiometry)

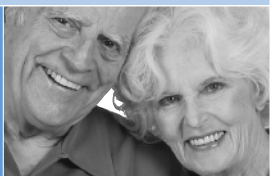
IN TRAN
communication for all

The hospital is able to arrange for an interpreter to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay through INTRAN. If you need an interpreter or a person to sign, please let us know.

If you require a large print version of this booklet, please contact PALS on **01493 453240**

Date of publication: October 2004
Revised December 2007, August 2009, October 2012
Review Date: October 2015
R 2 © James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
version 4

Patient Information



Why measure bone density?

Some bone loss is expected as part of the normal aging process. Osteoporosis is a condition where the bone loss is more than average. This leads to the bone becoming more porous and brittle than average and therefore more prone to fracture. Osteoporosis does not always have symptoms. In the past it has been difficult to identify those people who have the condition.

With bone densitometry it is possible to measure a person's bone density and therefore to assess whether they are at increased risk of fracture. Osteoporosis can be diagnosed early, giving individuals time to receive treatment or adopt lifestyle changes which will reduce their risk of fracture.

How do we measure bone density?

Bone density measurement involves a simple test called DXA (dual energy X-ray absorptiometry). DXA is safe, accurate and painless way of assessing the strength of bones. Although it does involve X-rays the combined dose is less than a chest X-ray.

During an examination with DXA the patient lies on a comfortable padded

table while the DXA unit scans two or more areas. These are usually the hip and lower spine although the forearm and upper spine can also be assessed.

The entire process takes only minutes to complete depending on the number of areas scanned. It involves no injection and it is painless.

The bone density measurement is then compared to a reference range of healthy adults with average bone density. The difference between this average and the measured bone density is then calculated and a score given which can predict whether the patient is at increased risk of fracture or is within the average range.

Bone density using DXA

- Simple, proven X-ray method
- Safe, low radiation
- Helps determine whether you are high, increased or low risk of fracturing a bone
- Fast and comfortable - only takes minutes
- Painless - no injections
- Does not involve being enclosed in a tunnel.

Preparation for a bone density scan

Unless instructed otherwise, eat normally on the day of the exam; **but avoid taking calcium supplements for at least 24 hours prior to your appointment.**

Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Casual clothing without zips, buttons or any metal are preferred, although you may be asked to change into a gown if necessary. Some body piercings may have to be removed.

You should not have had a barium study, radioisotope injection, oral or intravenous contrast material from a CT scan or MRI scan seven days prior to your DXA scan.

Please inform the DXA staff if you may be pregnant.

Where do I get the results?

If your GP referred you then he or she will get the results and you will need to discuss these with him or her. If a consultant at the James Paget University Hospital referred you a follow up appointment will be sent to you to discuss the results.