



Bone Density Scan (DXA)

Overview:

Bone density scanning is an enhanced form of x-ray* technology and is an imaging medical test used for measuring bone mineral density or any bone loss that may be occurring. X-rays are a non-invasive imaging medical test that enables physicians to diagnose and treat various medical conditions.

Bone density scanning or DXA tests can be performed as a whole body test or limited to the lower spine and hips. This DXA imaging test is most often used to diagnose osteoporosis, a condition that most often affects women after menopause but may also be found in men. Osteoporosis is a medical condition that causes the bones to become thinner, more fragile and fractures may be the end result.

Common questions about the Bone Density Scan (DXA)

How is the procedure performed?

The Bone Density Scan (DXA) is conducted on an outpatient basis. You will most likely be asked to lie on a padded table in a specific, but comfortable, position to allow the best x-ray image of the hips and spine. Bone density tests are quick and a painless procedure.

What preparation is needed prior to the DXA?

Please advise your physician if you take any calcium supplements as they should not be ingested for a period of 24 hours prior to a bone density scan (DXA). If you have received a barium examination or have been injected with a contrast material for another type of exam, you may have to wait 10-14 days before receiving a DXA exam. Women should always inform their physicians or x-ray technologist if there is any possibility that they may be pregnant.

What should I wear?

You should wear loose and comfortable clothing with no zippers, belts, or buttons that are made of metal.

How long will the Bone Density Scan (DXA) take?

The test is usually completed within 10 to 30 minutes depending upon the equipment used and the parts of the body being examined.

What can I expect after the exam?

You may return to your normal activities following the exam.

When will my physician get the results?

One of our radiologists will study the exam images and send a written report to your physician within two business days.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info.cfm?pg=dexa>