

Hip Hip Hooray

- Part 3

Good news, hip fractures are preventable. Dr Amritpal Singh (Consultant, Orthopaedic Surgery, Ng Teng Fong General Hospital) offers some insight.

Am I at risk for hip fractures?

Elderly persons are most prone to hip fractures due to osteoporosis, a condition in which bones become weaker and more brittle due to ageing and its effects on bone mineral density. Lower bone mineral density makes bones more prone to breakage or fractures. That's why a small twisting injury or fall from height can cause a hip fracture in elderly persons.

How do I know if I have low bone density?

A doctor can diagnose low bone density by using a Bone Mineral Density (BMD) scan. We recommend that ladies age 65 years and above get a BMD scan to screen for osteoporosis.

What can I do to prevent hip fractures?

You can do so by ensuring your bones are strong and dense.

- Keeping active is important. Weight-bearing activities such as walking aid in the maintenance of bone density and muscle tone. This in turn reduces falls.
- Maintain a balanced diet that is high in calcium and vitamin D. Take more dairy products and green leafy vegetables. Supplements can help boost your vitamin intake and ensure that your bones have sufficient building blocks to regenerate – this way you can avoid fractures from a minor trauma.
- If you are on any medication that may cause drowsiness, be careful as the risk of falls increases. We recommend that elderly persons with other joint pains use a walking stick to improve their balance. Diabetics should go for regular eye checks to maintain their eyesight and prevent falls caused by obscured vision. Lastly, keep your home hazard-free by not leaving things on the floor and tucking in wires which could otherwise be trip hazards.

**And this caps our series on Hip Fractures.
Stay hip, stay away from hip fractures!**

Contributed by Dr Amritpal Singh, Consultant, Division of Orthopaedic Trauma Surgery,
Department of Orthopaedic Surgery

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TRACK

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