



**Consultants in Neurology
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DEXA (DUAL ENERGY X-RAY ABSORPTION) BONE DENSITOMETRY PATIENT INFORMATION

Your scheduled appointment time and date is:

_____ on ____ / ____ / ____

On the day of your exam, please arrive 15 minutes before your appointment to allow for registration and processing of paperwork. You must check in and register with the clerical staff. If you have had x-rays or scans to diagnose this same or similar problem at another facility, please make sure you bring them with you.

The Bone Mineral Density (BMD) test may be one of the most important tests you'll take. That's because it's the best way to tell if you have thinning bones. It's important to understand what to expect during and after a BMD test so you can take advantage of all the options available to protect your bone health.

Why do I need a BMD test? Millions of people in the United States have thinning bones. In fact, thinning bones affect over half of all women over 50. What's more, it's a 'silent disease,' with no visible symptoms. That means you could have thinning bones and not even know it.

Why Your Doctor Prescribed a BMD Test. Your doctor may have scheduled your BMD test for a number of reasons. If you use medications that are known to cause bone loss, including corticosteroids such as Prednisone, various anti-seizure medications such as Dilantin and certain barbiturates, or high-dose thyroid replacement drugs, you may be at increased risk for bone loss. In addition, if you have a personal or maternal history of hip fracture or smoking, it's important to monitor your bone health.

How Should I Prepare for the Procedure? On the day of the exam eat normally, but don't take calcium supplements for at least 24 hours beforehand. Wear loose, comfortable clothing, avoiding garments that have zippers, belts or buttons made of metal. Inform your physician if you recently had a barium examination or have been injected with a contrast material for a computed tomography (CT) scan or radioisotope scan; you may have to wait 10 to 14 days before undergoing a DEXA test. Women should always inform their physician or x-ray technologist if there is a possibility they are pregnant.

What Will I Experience During the X-Ray Procedure? The DEXA Bone Density takes 10 to 30 minutes. You'll be asked to lie on a padded table with an x-ray generator below and a detector above. It is important that you stay as still as possible during the procedure to ensure a clear, useful image. No anesthesia is required. The procedure is painless and radiation exposure is minimal. It is a simple, non-invasive procedure.

Your test results will be in the form of two scores: T-score and Z-score. Your physician will explain these results at your follow up visit.