



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oklahoma HMO provides osteoporosis screening information

Approximately 44 million Americans have low bone density, are at risk of developing osteoporosis

OKLAHOMA – According to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, an estimated 12.3 million Americans over the age of 50 are expected to have osteoporosis by 2020. Because half of related fractures can be prevented with the right treatment, the best way to diagnose osteoporosis early is with a bone density test. GlobalHealth, an Oklahoma-based health insurance provider, is sharing information to educate Oklahomans on the importance of osteoporosis screenings.

“About one in four men and one in two women will break a bone in their lifetime due to osteoporosis,” said Dr. Wesley Williams, medical director at GlobalHealth. “Because you cannot feel your bones getting weaker, many people call osteoporosis the ‘silent disease’ and you may not even know you have it until you break a bone.”

GlobalHealth is providing information to help Oklahomans prevent osteoporosis-related fractures.

What is osteoporosis? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, osteoporosis is a skeletal disease where bones weaken and there is an increased risk of developing a fracture. This can occur because the body loses too much bone, makes too little bone or a combination of both.

Who is at risk? Osteoporosis is four times as common in women than in men and women over the age of 50 have the highest risk of developing the disease. Nearly 21-30% of those with a hip fracture die within a year, and men tend to have higher rates of fracture-related deaths compared to women. Additionally, a family history of osteoporosis is a risk factor, as well as those with small-boned and thin frames.

How can I prevent osteoporosis? By age 18 for girls and 20 for boys, 85-90% of adult bone mass is already acquired, meaning it is important to build strong bones during childhood to prevent osteoporosis later in life. You can also help prevent fractures by exercising regularly and eating healthy.

What screening options are available for osteoporosis? To diagnose osteoporosis before a broken bone occurs, you should talk to your primary care physician (PCP) about a bone mineral density test, also known as a central DXA scan. This screening estimates the density of your bones and will tell you whether you have normal or low bone density or osteoporosis. A DXA scan does not hurt and is the most common way to check for osteoporosis. It is similar to an X-ray of your hip and spine and is one of the front-line methods for osteoporosis screenings.

How often should I get screened? Women over the age of 65 and those at an increased risk of osteoporosis should get screened every two years or within six months of a bone fracture. Men should also talk to their PCP about osteoporosis screenings.

How can I treat osteoporosis? Your doctor will talk to you about treatment, including medication.

About GlobalHealth

GlobalHealth is changing health insurance in Oklahoma. As an industry leader, GlobalHealth is an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization covering individuals in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Working proactively with its members, GlobalHealth engages a personalized management plan to address their specific needs and ensure the best possible health outcomes. GlobalHealth utilizes cutting edge, predictive data technology as a foundation to deliver improved healthcare as part of its commitment to making health insurance more affordable. Its membership includes state, education and municipal employees, federal employees, and individuals who are eligible for Medicare. To learn more, visit www.GlobalHealth.com.

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