

# National Bone Health Alliance

STRONG BONES AMERICA

January 20, 2012

Letters to the Editor  
*The New York Times*  
620 Eighth Avenue  
New York, NY 10018

transmitted via email: [letters@nytimes.com](mailto:letters@nytimes.com)

RE: *Patients with Normal Bone Density Can Delay Retests, Study Suggests*

This study suggesting that some older women may not need frequent bone scans is good news for post-menopausal women with good or mildly low bone density, but the findings should not be misinterpreted for those already diagnosed with osteoporosis or low bone density who are still advised to have bone density tests every two years, or as recommended, to monitor their condition.

It's also important that all post-menopausal women discuss their risk factors for osteoporosis with their healthcare provider to determine whether they require a bone density test and how carefully their bone density should be tracked going forward. Currently only 13 percent of female Medicare beneficiaries report ever having a single screening test.

Bone density tests are not the sole basis for treatment decisions, but are an important weapon in preventing serious consequences of osteoporosis, which costs the U.S. \$19 billion annually in hospitalizations, treatment and emergency room visits.

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