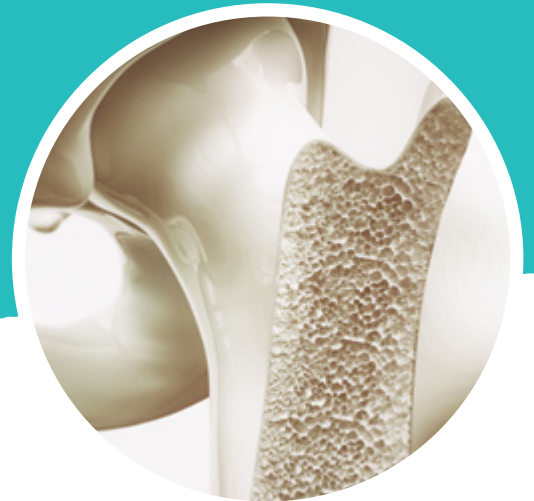


# Physical Activity and Osteoporosis

This factsheet is for you if you have been diagnosed with osteoporosis or are at risk of developing osteoporosis and have been advised to get more active by your doctor or nurse.

Use the information in this factsheet with the booklet Get Active Your Way. Order your free copy on [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)



## What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a disease that affects the strength and thickness of your bones. It makes bones fragile (easily broken). It is often not diagnosed until you have fractured (broken) one or more bones. Osteopenia is the name given to the early stages of Osteoporosis.

### Some symptoms of osteopenia and osteoporosis include:

- a broken bone caused by a trip or fall
- loss of height (two centimetres or more)
- a hump developing on the upper back
- sudden and severe back pain

If you have any of these symptoms, speak with your GP about referral for a DXA Scan. This scan is painless and will tell you if you have osteoporosis.

**1 in 2 women**  
**and 1 in 5 men**  
over the age of  
50 will break  
bones from  
Osteoporosis.

# How can regular physical activity help me?

**Regular physical activity will help you to improve your muscle control, posture, balance and co-ordination.**

Regularly doing weight bearing exercises, such as walking or playing racquet sports, will help you increase the strength of your bones and reduce your risk of falls and broken bones.

# How do I get started?

Use the booklet *Get Active Your Way* to help you make a plan to become more physically active.

**To get the most health benefits from physical activity, you need to be physically active at a moderate intensity for at least 30 minutes a day on five days a week (or for 150 minutes a week).**



It is recommended to check with your GP before you start becoming more active. They can help you set realistic goals that take into account your level of fitness, symptoms and medication.

A physiotherapist can give you tailored advice and support on becoming more active. Ask your GP for a referral or visit [www.iscp.ie](http://www.iscp.ie) to find a registered physiotherapist.

# Suggested activities to start with

Walking is a good activity to start with. To get the most from walking, you need to change your pace and route regularly. Walking up and down a flight of stairs ten times is the same as doing ten minutes of weight bearing activity. Other good activities for you include jogging, running, racquet sports (squash, tennis) and dancing.

Activities that increase muscle strength and balance are also helpful. Try and do some of the activities in the box, two to three days a week.

| Muscle strengthening activities   | Balance activities   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Digging, lifting and carrying while gardening</li><li>○ Carrying groceries</li><li>○ Circuit training</li><li>○ Step aerobics</li><li>○ Weight machines</li><li>○ Lifting hand held weights</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Tai Chi and Yoga</li><li>○ Backward and sideways walking and walking on heels and toes</li><li>○ Standing from a sitting position</li><li>○ Standing on one foot</li></ul> |

## Useful contacts

- [www.irishosteoporosis.ie](http://www.irishosteoporosis.ie)
- [www.iscp.ie](http://www.iscp.ie)
- [www.getirelandactive.ie](http://www.getirelandactive.ie)
- [www.getirelandwalking.ie](http://www.getirelandwalking.ie)

