

## Bone Health Osteoporosis & Falls Integrated Service

This service has a unique role as it draws together the many disciplines involved in osteoporosis. We are delighted to provide our highly specialized service to every body who may require it. Our services include:

1. Assessment of Osteoporosis fracture risk.
2. Assessment of falls risk.
3. Assessment of bone mineral density (DXA scanning).
4. Fracture liaison service.
5. Assessment of patients suffering from systemic diseases or taking medications that make them prone to osteoporosis.
6. The inpatients' Locomotor Unit serves the patients who require acute or urgent care.
7. Osteoporosis Advice Line: Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any query on: 01322 428 420

## Falls Services

More than 30% of people aged over 65 in the community fall each year, many of them more than once. This figure increases to 50% (one in two) for those over 80 years. From our own audit data we know that over 100 patients attend Darent Valley Hospital Accident & Emergency each month with a fall. The hospitals audit database was however only able to identify 59 patients in 3 months, meaning that only 20% of the total number of fallers were correctly identified.

The destiny of the 59 patients correctly identified as fallers is uncertain, but we know that they stayed for an average length of 42 days and were often subject to polypharmacy. If admitted with a fracture, they had a 1 in 5 chance of being started on osteoprotective drug treatment.

Standard Falls Service includes several components, namely the falls clinic, the ortho-geriatric liaison service, educational services, as well as close liaison with primary care services.

Please note that this brief summary is for general information and was not intended to review the issue. If you have any query or had any unusual symptom, please contact your doctor. It will help if you make a note of what you have experienced, when it started and how long it lasted.

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## Bone Health Osteoporosis & Falls Integrated Service



*Information about your*

## BONE DENSITY SCAN

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**Bone Disease**

## **What is DXA?**

DXA stands for dual x-ray absorptiometry. Low dose x-ray of two different energies are used to distinguish between bone and soft tissue, giving a very accurate measurement of bone density at these sites. DXA bone density studies of the spine and hip are considered the "gold standard" for diagnosing osteoporosis and following changes in bone density over time. The amount of mineralized tissue within a section of spine or hip is measured and expressed as gram per cm<sup>2</sup>.

## **Is a DXA bone density scan the same as a bone scan?**

No. The two scans are often confused because they sound alike, but they are different techniques used for different purposes. A bone scan is a nuclear medicine study used to look for cancer, stress fractures, and other bone or joint problems. It does not measure bone density and is not used to diagnose osteoporosis. DXA scanning is a service offered to you by the Metabolic Bone Diseases Unit at Darent Valley Hospital and is used to diagnose osteoporosis.

## **How do I prepare for a DXA scan?**

No special patient preparation is necessary. We only ask that you don't wear anything with buttons, snaps, or zippers from the waist down. Wearing trousers with an elastic waistband will allow you to remain fully clothed during the study.

If you have had any x-rays using contrast such as barium, or any nuclear medicine studies, please wait one week before having a DXA scan.

## **What can I expect to happen during the DXA scan?**

DXA is a painless, non-invasive test. You will be asked to lie still and quiet on a padded table, but you will be able to breathe normally. It is an open scan, so no need to worry about closed spaces. The study lasts only a few minutes. The x-ray dose you will be exposed to is extremely low, similar to what you would receive on a long distance airplane flight.

## **What happens next?**

Once the scan is finished you can go home and the computer will analyse the data and provide a printout.

## **How will I get the results?**

The results of your DXA scan will be sent to both yourself and your GP. You should arrange to discuss the results with your physician. If you have any query, you can contact our helpline and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

## **Confirming your appointment**

Please call the numbers shown on your appointment letter to confirm that you will be able to attend at that time otherwise your appointment will be given to another patient.

### ***Here to Help***

#### **Bone Health Service**

Email: [secretary@rheumatology4u.com](mailto:secretary@rheumatology4u.com)