



# Bone Densitometry Screenings

## **What is Bone Density?**

Bone density is a measurement of the amount of calcium and other minerals in a segment of bone. A higher mineral content indicates a higher bone density and strength. Tests help detect osteoporosis or monitor its treatment.

## **What to expect?**

Before a technologist performs a bone density screening, a quick and easy clinical assessment must be completed. This assessment contains medical history including information such as height and weight, broken bones after the age of 30, a history of smoking and certain medications, as these factors play a role in bone health.

After the clinical assessment is completed, a technologist takes the patient to the screening room where various images, including the lower back and hips, are taken. (If the patient has had a hip replacement or previous fracture, the technologist needs to know). Forearm images can be taken as an alternative to the hips to help determine the density of bones.

## **Why are bone density screenings important?**

The body is made up of bones. When they are not healthy and strong, serious medical conditions can develop including broken bones in late adulthood, osteopenia, and osteoporosis. Post-menopausal women are more prone to osteoporosis than men so it is important to start screening by the age of 55.

Body Mass Index (BMI) screenings are also available upon request. The GE Lunar DXA system is capable of accurately measuring and recording BMI by comparing the fat to muscle ratio.

For more information, call 814/362-8200.