



August 10, 2017

## **New National Survey Reveals 82 Percent of Postmenopausal Women Miss Critical Connection Between Osteoporosis and Bone Fractures**

*Joint Survey from National Osteoporosis Foundation, HealthyWomen and Radius Health Sounds an Urgent Call to Action for Women to Know Their Risk, Get the Facts*

*'Fractured Truth' Education Campaign Addresses Entrenched Misperceptions, Asks Women to Rethink Their Beliefs About Bone Health*

WALTHAM, Mass., Aug. 10, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- A fracture (bone break) in a postmenopausal woman, especially one caused by falling from a standing position or less, is an indicator of osteoporosis.<sup>1</sup> But, too often this crucial connection gets overlooked.

A startling 82 percent of postmenopausal women did not identify such bone fractures as a possible risk factor for osteoporosis, according to results from a new Harris Poll survey conducted on behalf of Radius Health, in partnership with HealthyWomen and the National Osteoporosis Foundation.<sup>2</sup> The survey aimed to measure osteoporosis knowledge of 1,012 postmenopausal women in the U.S. ages 50 and older, including those who are diagnosed with osteoporosis and those who are not.

"One in two women over age 50 will have a fracture caused by osteoporosis in her remaining lifetime, but our survey found that a majority of postmenopausal women are unaware fracture is a risk factor for osteoporosis," said Andrea Singer, MD, FACP, CCD, clinical director and trustee of the National Osteoporosis Foundation.<sup>3</sup> "It is critical that postmenopausal women do not dismiss seemingly insignificant fragility fractures as 'clumsiness,' but instead see them as an important indicator for bone fragility, disease progression and the need for intervention."<sup>1</sup>

### **Women Underestimate Osteoporosis and Fracture Significance**

- | Of postmenopausal women who have had a fracture from a standing position or less, only 13 percent of those with osteoporosis and 2 percent not diagnosed recognized that it may be related to bone health.<sup>2</sup>
- | Only one-third (32 percent) of postmenopausal women who have risk factors<sup>4</sup> for developing osteoporosis actually realize or believe they are at risk.<sup>2</sup>
- | Approximately two-thirds of postmenopausal women (even those diagnosed with osteoporosis and those at high risk for osteoporosis) were more likely to be concerned with other conditions, such as stroke (67 percent), heart attack (67 percent), and breast cancer (65 percent) than osteoporosis (56 percent),<sup>2</sup> even though more women over the age of 55 are hospitalized every year in the U.S. for osteoporosis-related fractures than for heart attacks, breast cancer, or strokes.<sup>5-6 7 8</sup>
- | Of postmenopausal women, 43 percent with osteoporosis and 44 percent without thought clumsiness caused their most recent fracture after falling from a standing position or less, without recognizing that it is not normal to break a bone from these types of falls.<sup>2</sup>

### **Patients and Healthcare Providers Require a Better Dialogue**

Research suggests only 2 in 10 older women in the U.S. who suffer from a fracture are tested or treated for osteoporosis.<sup>9-10 11 12 13</sup> Limited recognition and discussion about the link between osteoporosis and fractures may be a reason why the disease is underdiagnosed and undertreated.<sup>8</sup>

- | In the survey, 96 percent of postmenopausal women who say they have not been diagnosed with osteoporosis and have experienced a fracture/break from falling from a standing position or less were not told by their doctor it could be linked to osteoporosis.<sup>2</sup>
- | One-third (33 percent) of postmenopausal women in the survey with a fracture from falling from a standing position or

less were not referred for follow-up visits.<sup>2</sup>

"Once a person fractures due to osteoporosis, their risk of another break or fracture increases.<sup>14</sup> But, because no single physician specialty treats the condition, it can be difficult to spot and manage," said Dr. Tara Allmen, gynecologist and nationally certified menopause practitioner. "We need to ramp up the urgency among postmenopausal women and healthcare providers so they will proactively discuss and treat the condition, especially for women at high risk for fracture."

### **Misconceptions May Hinder Bone Health**

Many younger postmenopausal women (in their 50s and 60s) often mistakenly categorize osteoporosis as an unfortunate but largely unavoidable part of aging, which is one of many "fractured truths" about the disease. This belief, coupled with a lack of awareness about the link between fractures and osteoporosis, may keep women from being proactive about their bone health. The survey revealed additional knowledge gaps:

- | About 3 in 10 postmenopausal women (31 percent with osteoporosis and 27 percent without) *incorrectly* believe that "drinking milk or taking calcium supplements *alone* will prevent osteoporosis fractures/breaks."<sup>2</sup>
- | About one-quarter (24 percent) of postmenopausal women *incorrectly* believe there is *no way* to build new bone at their age.<sup>2</sup>
- | Three in 10 (30 percent) postmenopausal women with osteoporosis *mistakenly* believe the risk of a fracture/break cannot be reduced in women their age.<sup>2</sup>

"It's very clear from our survey results that we still have major osteoporosis knowledge gaps among postmenopausal women. Now that we've identified their current understanding of the disease, we can start to help fill the gaps through focused education," said HealthyWomen CEO Beth Battaglini. "It is time for women to get more facts and take control of their bone health."

To help fill these knowledge gaps, Radius Health launched the "Fractured Truth" public education initiative that seeks to drive understanding of the connection between fractures and osteoporosis, and empower women to have better conversations with their healthcare providers about their bone health.

"This is not your grandmother's disease — osteoporosis can affect women as young as age 50, many of whom live active lives and may not be aware they are at risk," said Dr. Lorraine Fitzpatrick, Chief Medical Officer at Radius Health. "It is also known as a 'silent disease,' and the connection with fracture is often overlooked, even in women who are diagnosed. We hope our education initiative will break the silence and help women to understand osteoporosis."

For more information and educational resources, please visit [www.FracturedTruths.com](http://www.FracturedTruths.com). There is also a "Fractured Truth" community on Facebook where postmenopausal women with osteoporosis can learn from each other and get the resources they need to be their own advocates: <https://www.facebook.com/FracturedTruth/>.

### **About the Survey**

*The survey was conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of Radius Health, Inc. in partnership with HealthyWomen and the National Osteoporosis Foundation from March 31 — April 17, 2017 among 1,012 postmenopausal women living in the U.S. aged 50+. Of 1,012 women, 501 women indicated they have been diagnosed with osteoporosis. The survey also included an oversample of 102 women who have osteoporosis and a fragility fracture, defined as having a fractured/broken bone from falling from standing position or less (even if on ice or cement). These respondents were combined with the women from the main sample who met the same criteria for a total of 280 women with osteoporosis and a fragility fracture. All relevant respondents (not just those who met the qualifying criteria) were weighted to separate targets from the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey for the U.S. female age 50-64 and female age 65+ populations. The variables used for weighting included age, education, race/ethnicity, region, household income, household size, marital status, employment status, and a propensity score, a proprietary Harris methodology that allows for the reduction in the bias inherent in self-selected online panels. Full weighting information is available upon request. Respondents for this survey were selected among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Poll surveys. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.*

### **About Radius**

Radius is a science-driven fully integrated biopharmaceutical company that is committed to developing and commercializing innovative therapeutics in the areas of osteoporosis, oncology and endocrine diseases. For more information, please visit [www.radiuspharm.com](http://www.radiuspharm.com).

## About HealthyWomen

For nearly 30 years, HealthyWomen has inspired and empowered millions of women to take a proactive role in their health. A progressive and unique women's health not-for-profit, HealthyWomen combines a 24/7 online health media platform with award-winning education and advocacy campaigns. HealthyWomen's web destination engages with readers and health care providers alike and provides valuable health information that educates women and guides them through the various ages and stages of life. For more information on HealthyWomen, visit [www.healthywomen.org](http://www.healthywomen.org)

## About the National Osteoporosis Foundation

Established in 1984, the National Osteoporosis Foundation is the nation's leading health organization dedicated to preventing osteoporosis and broken bones, promoting strong bones for life and reducing human suffering through programs of awareness, education, advocacy and research. For more information on the National Osteoporosis Foundation, visit [www.nof.org](http://www.nof.org).

- <sup>1</sup> Anderson, PA, Reitman, C, Jeray KJ. Own the bone: Spine practitioners' opportunity in managing patients with fragility fractures. SpineLine. 2015. [http://www.spine-digital.org/spine/july\\_august\\_2015?pg=14#pg14](http://www.spine-digital.org/spine/july_august_2015?pg=14#pg14). Accessed July 10, 2017.
- <sup>2</sup> Results from online survey conducted from March 31 - April 17, 2017 by Harris Poll on behalf of Radius Health in partnership with HealthyWomen and the National Osteoporosis Foundation of 1,012 postmenopausal women living in the U.S. aged 50+.
- <sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2004). Bone Health and Osteoporosis: A Report of the Surgeon General. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK45513/>. Accessed December 2, 2016.
- <sup>4</sup> At risk of osteoporosis is defined as having at least one of the following: currently smoke cigarettes or have smoked cigarettes within the last 5 years, drink 3 or more alcoholic beverages per day, diagnosed with a postmenopausal fracture from falling from a standing position or less, have a rheumatoid arthritis diagnosis, experienced premature menopause, have a father/mother/sister diagnosed with osteoporosis, current/past glucocorticoid use for more than 3 months at a time.
- <sup>5</sup> Burge R, Dawson-Hughes B, Solomon DH, Wong JB, King A, Tosteson A. Incidence and economic burden of osteoporosis-related fractures in the United States, 2005-2025. *J Bone Mineral Res.* 2007;22(3):465-475.
- <sup>6</sup> Mozaffarian DM, Benjamin EJ, Go AS, et al; American Heart Association Statistics Committee, Stroke Statistics Subcommittee. Heart disease and stroke statistics 2016 update. *Circulation.* 2016;133(15):e38-e360..
- <sup>7</sup> National Cancer Institute. SEER stat fact sheets: female breast cancer. <http://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/breast.html>. Accessed November 1, 2016.
- <sup>8</sup> Singer A, Exuzides A, Spangler L, et al. Burden of illness for osteoporotic fractures compared with other serious diseases among postmenopausal women in the United States. *Mayo Clin Proc.* 2015;90(1):53-62.
- <sup>9</sup> Cosman et al. Clinician's Guide to Prevention and Treatment of Osteoporosis. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4176573/>. Accessed January 2017.
- <sup>10</sup> Freedman et al. Treatment of osteoporosis: are physicians missing an opportunity? <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10954094>. Accessed January 2017.
- <sup>11</sup> Andrare et al. Low frequency of treatment of osteoporosis among postmenopausal women following a fracture. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14504118>. Accessed January 2017.
- <sup>12</sup> Gunter et al. Management of osteoporosis in women aged 50 and older with osteoporosis-related fractures in a managed care population. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14577902>. Accessed January 2017.
- <sup>13</sup> Kanis et al. The Osteoporosis Treatment Gap. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jbmr.2301/pdf>. Accessed January 2017.

<sup>14</sup> Harvey NC, Johansson H, Siggeirsdottir K, et al. Imminent risk of major osteoporotic fracture after fracture. *Osteoporosis International*. 2016;27 (suppl 1). <http://www.wco-iof-esceo.org/sites/all/files/wco16/WCO16-AbstractBook.pdf>. Accessed December 2, 2016.

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