

# Gairdner Bone Densitometry Services

Welcome to Gairdner Bone Densitometry Services at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

The bone density unit has been providing a bone densitometry service for patients referred inside and outside the hospital since 1986

## What is a bone density test?

Bone density is a painless test which measures how much calcium there is in your bones using Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA). The purpose of this test is to give you and your doctor a measure of how strong your bones are, and indicate your future risk of fracture.

## What happens?

A bone density test takes approximately 15-20 minutes. You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and then lie on your back on a scanning table. A weak beam of x-rays will scan your spine, hip or forearm depending on which scans your doctor has requested. The radiation dose is low (similar to a chest x-ray). Don't panic! - no blood or bone samples are taken and you are not enclosed in a tunnel.

## Is there any preparation?

If possible, please remove any body piercing (e.g. navel rings) or magnets from your torso before the test. Also avoid wearing tight briefs as these may distort the scan image.

If you have had a barium, CT scan, radioisotope, or have been injected with any contrast dye (used for testing purpose) you need to wait 14 days before your bone density procedure. **Please contact us if you need to reschedule your appointment.**

## What happens to your results?

Your results will be compared with what is normal for your age and sex and also assessed in relation to your future risk of fracture. Your report should reach your doctor in approximately 5-7 working days of your test. Please return to your doctor to discuss the results.

## Do you need a referral from your doctor?

We cannot scan you without a written request from your doctor. **Please make sure you bring your referral with you to your appointment.**

## Have you had a previous bone density?

Unless your doctor has specified otherwise, you should have your bone density tests at the same practice where you had your original scans. Comparisons between bone density scans obtained at different facilities are not possible as each bone density machine gives a slightly different reading.

## Car Parking

The closest patient car park to C Block is accessible from Winthrop Avenue (refer to the map). Please note: a fee is charged for parking. Please pay at the ticket machines located inside the multi-deck car park near the lifts. You can pay by cash or credit card.

## Bus Routes

The hospital is serviced by the following routes from:

Perth - 103, 24, 25

Esplanade and Wellington St Bus Station – 950

Fremantle - 103, 998 (999 for return journey)

Claremont - 24, 25; Subiaco - 97, 24, 25

Morley - 999 (998 for return journey), 950

Contact the Transperth Infoline for more details on 13 62 13 (TTY for hearing impaired 9428 1999).

## What you need to know about Medicare & Veterans' Affairs Rebates

Only people with certain medical conditions or risk factors are entitled to claim a rebate. Rebates are only available under the following item numbers for the following conditions:

- **12306** Proven low bone density (T-score  $\leq -2.5$  or Z-score  $\leq -1.5$ ) or fractures with minimal trauma (*1 claim every 2 years*).
- **12312** Prolonged glucocorticoid therapy, male hypogonadism, female hypogonadism (before age 45) or excess glucocorticoid secretion (*1 claim every year*).
- **12315** Chronic illnesses affecting your bones (Primary hyperparathyroidism, chronic liver or kidney disease, proven malabsorptive disorders, rheumatoid arthritis or thyroxine excess) (*1 claim every 2 years*).
- **12320** Age 70 years or older, initial screening or with T-score of  $-1.5$  or above (*1 claim every 5 years*).
- **12321** A change in medication for osteoporosis treatment more than 1 year ago.
- **12322** Age 70 years or older with T-score less than  $-1.5$  but more than  $-2.5$  (*1 claim every 2 years*).

**There is no Medicare or Veterans' Affairs rebate for screening tests.**

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