

Updated Guidelines Focus On Osteoporosis Therapy

BY DOUG BRUNK

The North American Menopause Society's updated position statement on the management of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women includes the FRAX tool to calculate the risk of major osteoporotic fracture and recommends increasing vitamin D₃ intake.

"It's the most current and practice-oriented, evidence-based statement that's out at the moment," Dr. Wulf H. Utian, honorary founding president and executive director emeritus of NAMS, said in an interview. "It's taken all of the current evidence into account and has come out with some key recommendations—not a lot of which are absolutely new—but it summarizes [the evidence] extremely well and deals with all the issues."

The 2010 edition of the NAMS statement, which was last updated in 2006, is available for free at www.menopause.org/aboutmeno/consensus.aspx.

The statement recommends the use of the World Health Organization's FRAX (Fracture Risk Assessment) tool to calculate a patient's 10-year risk of major osteoporotic fracture. FRAX integrates the fracture risks associated with clinical risk factors as well as bone mineral density at the femoral neck.

"It's distressing to be told that you have osteopenia or osteoporosis. To be able to use the FRAX tool to reduce that to a number—some reasonable estimate of fracture risk—is very helpful," Dr. Steven T. Harris, a member of the editorial board that updated the position statement, said in an interview.

Dr. Utian, who reviewed the position statement as a member of the 2008-2009 NAMS board of trustees, said that FRAX was endorsed because clinicians have come to realize "some of the limitations of DXA [dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry] and the overuse of DXA, which could lead to inappropriate therapies. While DXA is a valuable tool, the FRAX gives you an ability to speak to individuals and actually give them an idea of what their risk is. It also gives health care organizations the ability to set parameters at what level of risk they would consider therapy to be indicated."



The statement says drug therapy is indicated for postmenopausal women with osteoporotic vertebral or hip fracture, bone mineral density consistent with osteoporosis (a T score of -2.5 or lower), or a T score from -1.0 to -2.5 plus a 10-year FRAX risk of at least 20% for a major osteoporotic fracture (hip, shoulder, wrist, and spine) or of at least 3% for a hip fracture.

Another new recommendation calls for postmenopausal women to obtain 800-1,000 IU/day of vitamin D₃, up from 400-600 IU/day in the 2006 statement. "Even in temperate areas, there isn't enough sun exposure to guarantee vitamin D sufficiency,"

said Dr. Harris of the University of California, San Francisco.

As for choice of osteoporosis therapy, the statement notes that no head-to-head trials have compared the effectiveness of medications in reducing fracture risk. Approved treatment options include bisphosphonates, selective estrogen-receptor modulators (SERMs), parathyroid hormone, estrogens, and calcitonin.

According to the statement, bisphosphonates "are the first-line drugs for treating postmenopausal women with osteoporosis. They have reduced the risk of vertebral fractures by 40%-70% and reduced the incidence of nonvertebral fracture, including hip fracture, by about half this amount."

The SERM raloxifene "is most often considered for postmenopausal women with low bone mass or younger postmenopausal women with osteoporosis. It prevents bone loss and reduces the risk of vertebral fractures, but its effectiveness in reducing other fractures is uncertain."

The statement notes that calcitonin "is not a first-line drug for postmenopausal osteoporosis treatment, as its fracture efficacy is not strong and its [bone mineral density] effects are less than those of other agents. However, it is an option for women with osteoporosis who are more than 5 years beyond menopause."

Dr. Utian said that "we have a number of valuable therapies. Most of them are bone sparing, but gradually we're beginning to see the development of bone-developing therapies. Currently, prevention is a lot more effective than attempts at cure." ■

'Currently, prevention is a lot more effective than attempts at cure.'

DR. UTIAN

Editor in Chief Mary Jo M. Dales

Executive Editors Denise Fulton, Kathy Scarbeck

Managing Editor Calvin Pierce

Deputy Managing Editor Leanne Sullivan

Senior Editors Christina Chase, Kathryn DeMott, Lori Buckner Farmer, Joyce Frieden, Catherine Hackett, Keith Haglund, Gina L. Henderson, Sally Koch Kubetin, Teresa Lassman, Mark S. Lesney, Jane Salodof MacNeil, Catherine Cooper Nellist, Amy Pfeiffer, Terry Rudd, Elizabeth Wood

Associate Editors Felicia Rosenblatt Black, Therese Borden, Lorinda Bullock, Jay C. Cherniak, Richard Franki, Virginia Ingram-Wells, Jane Locastro, Renée Matthews, Carol Nicotera-Ward, Markette Smith

Reporters *Chicago:* Patrice Wendling; *Denver:* Bruce Jancin; *Los Angeles:* Betsy Bates; *Miami:* Damian McNamara; *Mid-Atlantic:* Michele G. Sullivan; *New England:* Diana Mahoney; *New York:* Mary Ellen Schneider; *Philadelphia:* Mitchel L. Zoler; *San Diego:* Doug Brunk; *San Francisco:* Sherry Boschert, Robert Finn; *Washington:* Alicia Ault, Jeff Evans, Elizabeth Mechatie, Heidi Splete, Miriam E. Tucker, Kerri Wachter

Contributing Writers Christine Kilgore, Mary Ann Moon

Project Manager Susan D. Hite

Assignments Manager Megan Evans

Address Changes Fax change of address (with old mailing label) to 973-290-8245 or e-mail change to subs@elsevier.com

Reprints Call 240-221-2419

Editorial Offices 5635 Fishers Lane, Suite 6000, Rockville, MD 20852, 877-524-9336, imnews@elsevier.com

Director of Information Technology Doug Sullivan

Senior Systems Administrators Lee J. Unger, Kreg M. Williams

Systems Administrator/Application Support Peter Ayinde

Accounts Payable Coordinator Daniela Silva

INTERNAL MEDICINE NEWS is an independent newspaper that provides the practicing internist with timely and relevant news and commentary about clinical developments in the field and about the impact of health care policy on the specialty and the physician's practice.

The ideas and opinions expressed in INTERNAL MEDICINE NEWS do not necessarily reflect those of the Publisher. Elsevier Inc. will not assume responsibility for damages, loss, or claims of any kind arising from or related to the information contained in this publication, including any claims related to the products, drugs, or services mentioned herein.

POSTMASTER Send changes of address (with old mailing label) to INTERNAL MEDICINE NEWS Circulation, 60 Columbia Rd., Bldg. B, 2nd flr., Morristown, NJ 07960.

Executive Director, Operations Jim Chicca

Director, Production/Manufacturing Yvonne Evans

Production Manager Judi Sheffer

Production Specialists Maria Aquino, Anthony Draper, Rebecca Slebodnik

Creative Director Louise A. Koenig

Design Supervisor Elizabeth Byrne Lobdell

Senior Designers Sarah L.G. Breden, Yenling Liu

Designer Lisa M. Marfori

Photo Editor Catherine Harrell

Sales Director, IMNG

Mark E. Altier, 973-290-8220, m.altier@elsevier.com

Sales Manager, Internal Medicine News

Phil Soufleris, 973-290-8224, p.soufleris@elsevier.com

National Account Managers

Kathleen Hiltz, 973-290-8219, k.hiltz@elsevier.com

Cathy McGill, 973-290-8221, c.mcgill@elsevier.com

Classified Sales Manager, IMNG

Robert Zwick 973-290-8226, fax 973-290-8250, r.zwick@elsevier.com

Advertising Offices

60 Columbia Rd., Bldg. B, 2nd flr., Morristown, NJ 07960, 973-290-8200, fax 973-290-8250

Sr. Program Manager, Customized Programs

Malika Wicks

Circulation Analyst Barbara Cavallaro,

973-290-8253, b.cavallaro@elsevier.com

Program/Marketing Manager Jennifer Eckert

Business Controller Dennis Quirk

Adv. Services Manager Joan Friedman

Manager, Administration/Conventions

Lynne Kalish

Receptionist Linda Wilson

INTERNAL MEDICINE NEWS (ISSN 1097-8690) is published semimonthly by Elsevier Inc., 60 Columbia Rd., Bldg. B, 2nd flr., Morristown, NJ 07960, 973-290-8200, fax 973-290-8250. Subscription price is \$139.00 per year. Periodicals postage paid at Morristown, NJ, and additional offices.

Founding Publisher: Jack O. Scher
Founding Editor: William Rubin

©Copyright 2010, by Elsevier Inc.

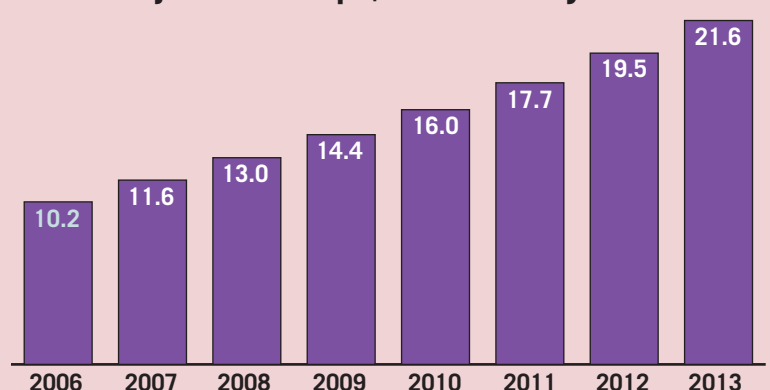


INTERNATIONAL
MEDICAL NEWS
GROUP



VITAL SIGNS

Global Market for Health Care Computer Systems Projected to Top \$20 Billion by 2013



Note: Figures represent revenues at the manufacturers' level.

Source: Kalorama Information, July 2009 report on Healthcare Computer Systems

Case Study In:

Colesevelam Hydrochloride for Management of a Patient With Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus and Hyperlipidemia

A supplement supported by Daiichi-Sankyo.

Available at:

[www.internalmedicineneeds.com/
content/medicaleducationlibrary](http://www.internalmedicineneeds.com/content/medicaleducationlibrary)

See page 13

Disclosures: The development of the position statement was supported by an unrestricted educational grant from the Alliance for Better Bone Health, a collaboration between Warner Chilcott and its affiliates and Sanofi-Aventis US. Dr. Utian and Dr. Harris disclosed relationships with multiple pharmaceutical firms.