Bone Fractures More Common in HIV

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HIV-positive people are more likely to suffer broken bones than their age-matched HIV-negative peers, according to a new study published online in the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism. Authors Steven Grinspoon, MD, of Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, and his colleagues argue that this is the first study to show a higher prevalence of fractures in HIV-positive people and ultimately adds to the seriousness of other studies finding significantly higher rates of low bone mineral density among those living with the virus.

Various studies have found higher rates of reduced bone mineral density—was 2.87 percent among the HIV-positive patients, compared with 1.77 percent among the HIV-negative patients.

Among HIV-positive females, the overall fracture prevalence was 2.49 percent-compared with 1.72 percent among the HIV-negative females. Among the HIV-positive males, the fracture prevalence was also higher in the HIV-infected compared with the HIV-negative patients: 3.08 versus 1.83 percent, respectively.

“As the HIV-infected population ages,” the authors write, “reduced bone mineral density and increased fracture risk may become an even greater problem. Whether increased fractures are the [result] of antiretroviral therapy, increased rates of traditional risk factors such as low weight among HIV-infected patients, or HIV infection-and its accompanying metabolic and inflammatory disturbances-itself remains to be determined…. This study suggests the importance of assessing bone density and minimizing factors contributing to increased fracture risk in the HIV-infected population.”

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