

## BONE DENSITY SCAN (DXA OR DEXA)



### Overview

This scan is performed to measure the density of the patient's bones. It is performed with a device called a dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry scanner. The scan can identify loss of bone density.

### Why it is Performed

Bone scans are most commonly recommended for patients who are at an increased risk of developing osteoporosis. This includes people who have experienced a loss of height, people who have experienced a drop in hormone levels, people who have easily fractured a bone, and people who take certain medications.

### The Procedure

During the scan, the patient is positioned on a padded table under the arm of the scanner. When the scanner is activated, it emits a low dose of radiation. The x-rays are targeted to key parts of the body. In most cases, the bones of the lower spine, hip or forearm are used. The patient must remain still during the scan to avoid blurring of the x-ray images. A typical scan takes about ten minutes to complete.

### Diagnosis

When the scan is complete, the images are analyzed by a computer. It calculates the patient's bone density. If the patient has experienced a loss of bone density, the physician can determine a proper course of treatment.

