

ROS Risk Checker- FAQs for healthcare professionals

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What is the risk checker

It's a web-based questionnaire for people to fill in who are interested in finding out more about their risks of osteoporosis and fractures and positive action they can take to promote bone strength and reduce the risk of a fragility fracture.

What's its purpose

It raises awareness of the risk factors for osteoporosis and fragility fractures and signposts to information about positive lifestyle changes for bone health.

It starts users on a journey to understand more about their bone health and encourages those with important risk factors to discuss them with a health care professional.

What is it not

It is not intended to replace or replicate clinical fracture risk assessment tools such as FRAX. These were developed and validated to be used in clinical practice to identify patients who may benefit from osteoporosis drug treatments.

Fracture risk assessment tools estimate the risk of fracture, usually expressed as a 10 year risk. They are used with clinical guidance such as the National Osteoporosis Guideline (NOGG) or SIGN to identify patients who are likely to benefit from intervention including bone strengthening medications.

How does it stratify the answers and what is recommended

People with key risk factors (women under 50 with early menopause, people taking oral steroids or drug treatments for breast or prostate cancer and people over the age of 50 with a fragility fracture) who have not already had a bone health assessment and are not taking bone protective treatment are encouraged to make an appointment with their doctor to discuss the potential need for further investigations and tests such as a formal 'fracture risk assessment' and drug treatments to promote bone strength.

People with other risk factors are encouraged to discuss them with their doctor/ HCP at some point.

Factors include:

- Fragility fracture
- Parental hip fracture
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Conditions causing low oestrogen or testosterone (anorexia, Klinefelter syndrome etc)
- Hyperthyroidism
- Hyperparathyroidism

- Mal-absorption disorders (Crohns, coeliac etc)
- Neurological conditions increasing the risk of falls (MS etc)
- Anti-spasmodic medications
- Alcohol consumption
- Smoking (tobacco products)

Those without risk factors are reassured that they have no specific risk factor for osteoporosis and fragility fractures at the current time. All who use the risk checker are encouraged to consider making positive lifestyle changes and to be aware that they may develop new risk factors in the future.

What do the users get?

Users get information about risk factors and healthy lifestyles for good bone health when they have answered each question and their result is shown on the screen at the end. There is the option to have a printout explaining their results to be emailed to them and they are encouraged to take appropriate action depending on their level of risk.

It is explained that the risk checker is a 'first step' and any formal clinical assessment or diagnosis will be implemented by their doctor or other HCP if it is considered appropriate.

How can the Risk Checker help me?

The risk checker will encourage appropriate people who have significant risk factors for osteoporosis and fragility fractures to request clinical bone health assessment and any further investigations including bone density scanning and bone medications that they may need.

We worked with clinical advisers to ensure appropriate patients are advised to have a consultation with a health care professional.

What web resources are there to help me further advise my patients?

[Tools and resources | ROS \(theros.org.uk\)](#)

[Osteoporosis resources for primary care | ROS \(theros.org.uk\)](#)

[RCGP Osteoporosis e-Learning | ROS \(theros.org.uk\)](#)

Are there resources I can order to give to patients

[Royal Osteoporosis Society | For your patients \(theros.org.uk\)](#)

[Osteoporosis information and support | Royal Osteoporosis Society \(theros.org.uk\)](#)