

OTHER CONDITIONS

Some health conditions share causes, symptoms or treatment options with [osteoporosis](#). Or they sound similar. Find out more about these conditions.

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Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis is different to osteoporosis. Because their names are similar, many people confuse them.

Osteoarthritis is a condition that causes joints to become painful and stiff. It can affect any joint in the body. If it affects the spine, it is sometimes called spondylosis.

You can have both osteoporosis and osteoarthritis. Staying active is important in both conditions. If you have osteoarthritis, exercises to strengthen your muscles and exercises to improve your general fitness are helpful. Talk to a healthcare professional about how to exercise safely with both conditions.

If you have osteoarthritis, your bone density scan (DXA / DEXA) results may be different to people without osteoarthritis. This is because osteoarthritis causes osteophytes. Osteophytes are bony lumps that can grow on the bones in the spine or around the joints. They do not usually cause problems. But the scan cannot tell the difference between normal bone and osteophytes. The scan results may say that your bones are stronger than they actually are. Your healthcare professional will consider this when looking at your bone density scan results.

Find out more about osteoarthritis on the NHS website. Or visit the charity Arthritis UK at arthritis-uk.org for information and support.

Osteogenesis imperfecta (Brittle bone disease)

Osteogenesis imperfecta is a rare genetic condition that causes bones to break easily. It is sometimes called brittle bone disease. People are born with the condition. It is usually diagnosed during childhood.

The condition affects people differently. Some people have mild symptoms and others have more severe symptoms. As well as having weaker bones, the symptoms of osteogenesis imperfecta can include:

- being shorter than other children
- hearing loss
- tiredness
- weak teeth
- a blue tinge to the white part of the eye.

The medicines used to treat osteogenesis imperfecta can also be used to treat osteoporosis.

Osteogenesis imperfecta is different to osteoporosis. Osteogenesis imperfecta causes broken bones due to a problem with collagen production. Collagen is the protein that gives our bones structure.

Find out more about osteogenesis imperfecta at the [Brittle Bone Society](https://brittlebone.org). Visit **brittlebone.org**

Osteomalacia (Rickets)

Osteomalacia is a condition where bones get weak due to not getting enough vitamin D or calcium. Osteomalacia can cause muscle cramping, bone pain and broken bones. If it happens in children, it is called rickets, and the main symptom is bowed legs. Treatment for osteomalacia and rickets usually involves vitamin D and calcium supplements.

Osteomalacia is different to osteoporosis.

Find out more about osteomalacia on the [NHS website](https://nhs.uk/conditions/rickets-and-osteomalacia/) at **nhs.uk/conditions/rickets-and-osteomalacia/**

Transient osteoporosis

Transient osteoporosis is different to osteoporosis. Because their names are similar, many people think they are the same condition.

Transient osteoporosis is a rare condition that causes sudden **joint pain** and small areas of weak bone. It most commonly occurs in the hip. It will usually resolve on its own within nine months. In some cases, transient osteoporosis can happen again. It can also affect multiple joints. When this happens it is called regional migratory osteoporosis.

Most people are treated with rest, physiotherapy and pain relief medicines. Some people are offered one [zoledronate treatment](#). This is a medicine used to treat osteoporosis.

Transient osteoporosis is not well understood.

Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS)

CRPS is a rare condition where you get chronic pain after an injury or surgery. It can happen after a broken bone. The pain is longer-lasting and more painful than usual. CRPS is not well understood but can respond to treatment.

Pain from a broken bone will usually get better over a few weeks to months. If your pain does not improve over this time or gets worse it's important to talk to your GP. It could be CRPS.

Some people get some small areas of osteoporosis with CRPS. But there is no evidence that it increases your chance of broken bones.

You can find out more about CRPS on the [NHS website](#). Visit [nhs.uk/conditions/complex-regional-pain-syndrome/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/complex-regional-pain-syndrome/)

More support and information

About our health information

Our health information is written by the health information team and is reviewed by healthcare professionals and people living with osteoporosis. We make every reasonable effort to ensure the content is accurate and up-to-date.

Our information is not a substitute for medical advice provided by your own doctor or other healthcare professional. Please always talk to a healthcare professional to discuss your bone health. ROS is not responsible for and we cannot accept liability for misinterpretation, misuse of information, loss, harm or damage arising from any reliance on or use of the information or guidance provided.

For more information about osteoporosis visit theros.org.uk/info or call **01761 471771** to order printed information.

Support for you

The Bone Health and Osteoporosis UK online community is a welcoming and safe space for you to share your experiences with others. Whether you're living with osteoporosis or supporting someone, our community is here for you. Visit theros.org.uk/online-community

We have a network of support groups across the UK, which are run by volunteers. Our groups provide support by organising regular meetings – both face-to-face and online. Regardless of where you live, you can join an online meeting from anywhere in the UK. Find your local support group and view the online programme at theros.org.uk/support-groups or email volunteerengagement@theros.org.uk

Our specialist Helpline nurses are here to answer your questions or concerns about bone health or living with osteoporosis. Visit theros.org.uk/helpline

Join the Royal Osteoporosis Society and, from just £3 a month, we'll always be in your corner. Whether you need information to make sense of your diagnosis, or guidance on ways to live well with osteoporosis, we're here for you. No matter what the future has in store. Join today at theros.org.uk/membership or call **01761 473287**

About the Royal Osteoporosis Society

We're the Royal Osteoporosis Society – the UK's largest national charity dedicated to improving bone health and beating osteoporosis. And we're here for everyone. We equip people with practical information and support to take action on their bone health.

Working with healthcare professionals and policy-makers, we're influencing and shaping policy and practice at every level. We're driving the research and development of new treatments, to beat osteoporosis together.

How you can help

As an independent charity, we don't receive any government funding. So we can only continue to provide our services through the generosity of our supporters.

We would appreciate any donation you're able to give to support our work. If you'd like to donate, visit theros.org.uk/donate or call **01761 473287**

Your donation will help us support more people with osteoporosis.

To find out about volunteering, visit theros.org.uk/volunteer

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