Fracture risk checklist

The factors worth knowing about yourself, in a form you can hand over.

WHY NOW RATHER THAN LATER

Bone loss accelerates around and after the final period rather than declining gradually. The loss happening now determines where you start from later. You cannot easily recover bone once it has gone, but you can substantially influence how much you lose.

Does any of this apply to me?

- [ ] Menopause before 45, or premature ovarian insufficiency before 40
- [ ] A parent who had a hip fracture
- [ ] Long term steroid use
- [ ] A previous fracture from a minor fall
- [ ] Very low body weight, now or in the past
- [ ] A history of disordered eating, or of periods stopping during athletic training
- [ ] Rheumatoid arthritis or another inflammatory condition
- [ ] Coeliac disease or another condition affecting absorption
- [ ] Current smoker
- [ ] Regularly more than 14 units of alcohol a week

If several apply, raise it with your GP, who can assess your fracture risk formally.

What protects bone

WHAT	WHY
Resistance training	Bone responds to load. Two sessions a week
Impact	Brisk walking, stairs, hopping. Does not have to be dramatic
Balance work	Falls are how most fragility fractures actually happen
Vitamin D	UK advice is to consider a supplement in autumn and winter
Calcium	Through food where possible
HRT	Maintenance of bone density and reduced fracture risk is a proven benefit, even at low doses

Questions for your GP

- Given these risk factors, should my fracture risk be assessed formally?
- Would a DEXA scan be appropriate for me?
- Should I be taking vitamin D, and at what dose?
- Does bone protection change the HRT conversation in my case?

ONE THING I WOULD NOT ASSUME

That being active is automatically enough. Running is loading and good for bone at hip and spine, but it is not comprehensive, and endurance training with inadequate fuelling can work against bone.

NOT MEDICAL ADVICE. Educational content only. Many symptoms have causes other than perimenopause, including thyroid disease, anaemia and diabetes. Please speak to your GP about anything that concerns you.