

NEWSLETTER

Issue no. 1 - October 1996

Welcome to the first issue of the CaMos newsletter.

WHAT IS OSTEOPOROSIS?

Osteoporosis is a bone disease that results in a loss of calcium from the bones. Over time the bones become brittle and fracture easily. Often called the *Silent Thief*, Osteoporosis affects one in four women and one in ten men over the age of 50.

During childhood and adolescence, bone increases in strength and size. Peak bone mass is reached in the early thirties, and thereafter normal bone loss occurs due to aging. Excessive bone loss results in Osteoporosis. People with Osteoporosis may have developed less bone in their early years or they lose a greater amount later in life. Broken bones are the most common problem caused by Osteoporosis and may be the first sign of the disease. Fractures of the spine, hip and wrist often occur when the bones become thin.

THE CANADIAN MULTICENTRE OSTEOPOROSIS STUDY OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

The purpose of the study is to determine the frequency of Osteoporosis in the Canadian population and the probability of developing fractures. CaMos is a 5 year study with a recruitment goal of 9000 subjects, 1000 subjects per centre. Subjects are randomly selected from the residential telephone subscribers directory in their area. An introductory letter is sent, followed by a phone call.

An eligible participant must be 25 years or older, live in a 50km radius of the study centre and fit

into an age and sex category according to the recruitment schedule. A subject is randomly selected from the eligible members in the household. The chosen person completes a questionnaire, has a Bone Mineral Density (DXA) and Ultrasound of the heel. If the subject is 50 years of age or over, an X-ray of the spine is also done.

Yearly, a mailed questionnaire will be sent to each subject for completion. At 2½ years, women aged 46-60 years at the time of their first interview, will be contacted for

a follow-up Questionnaire, DXA and Ultrasound. At five years all subjects will be contacted for a follow-up interview and clinical testing.

The first study of its kind in Canada, the study includes the Coordinating and Analysis centres (Montreal), Data Entry (Kingston) Quality Control (Edmonton) and nine recruiting centres: Vancouver, Calgary, Saskatoon, Hamilton, Toronto, Kingston, Quebec City, Halifax, St-John's.

1995 POLL OF 600 CANADIAN WOMEN

Interesting results were obtained from a poll conducted by Compas Inc., an Ottawa based research firm, about Osteoporosis awareness.

The survey showed that the vast majority of women of all age groups are aware of the disease:

Age Group	Aware of osteoporosis
18 - 24 years	83%
25 - 34 years	86%
35 - 44 years	84%
45 - 54 years	92%
55 - 64 years	89%
65 + years	93%

When asked whether anything was currently being done in terms of their lifestyle and/or diet, specifically geared toward minimizing the potential of developing osteoporosis, 50% of respondents

answered no.

The 50% who said yes, were asked what specifically was being done:

Exercising	31%
Drinking milk	32%
Taking supplements	20%
Eating properly	5%
Drugs / medication	7%
Regular check ups / tests	2%
Stopped smoking	1%
Cut down on alcohol	0%
Other	2%

These changes were most likely made in the belief that the risk of developing osteoporosis would be reduced. This may be true, but has not yet been proven. This is why you are participating in CaMos, for us to be able to determine what preventive measures can be taken to reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis.

PRELIMINARY STUDY RESULTS

CaMos is now in the second half of the recruiting phase. The nine participating centres have successfully enrolled 46% of the required number of subjects for the study.

Thus far, our most senior female participant is 96 years of age, and lives in Calgary. Quebec is the residence of our most senior male. He is 97 years of age.

Although it is too early to make any definite conclusions, certain trends are appearing. On average, calcium consumption among males and females younger than 50 years meets their requirements without

the need for calcium supplements. On the other hand, the average calcium intake of men and women 50 and older is close to but slightly less than the daily recommended intake. More than twice as many women as men 50 years and over have taken a calcium supplement in the past year.

To date, almost 10% of women 50 years and over have broken their hip, pelvis, forearm/wrist, ribs or spine, after the age of 50 compared to 6% of male participants. Twice as many men as women aged less than 50 reported a broken hip, pelvis, forearm/wrist, ribs or spine in their lifetime.

CaMos

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

CaMos is an acronym for Canadian Multicentre Osteoporosis Study. "Ca" stands for Canada and coincidentally is the chemical symbol for calcium, "os" is latin for bone, the two are separated by "M" representing multicentre. The maple leaf precedes the acronym because it is a Canadian study. "os" is gray and porous to remind us of bone material. The off-white and grainy letterhead and envelopes remind us of the color and porous texture of bone.



Your participation is very important for the success of the study. We thank you for your cooperation and look forward to communicating with you regularly.

NEXT ISSUE

A regular feature starting with the next issue will be a section called *Local News*. Look out for your Centre's specific news.

Editors: Jane Allan, Pat Krutzen, Suzanne Lefebvre, Suzette Poliquin