

Thought for the Week

Don't Let It Sneak Up on You

OSTEOPOROSIS KILLED my mother. It's taken me a while to reach this conclusion, but no I'm almost sure. The final blow to her body came because of a terrible head-on collision. But, I wonder, would her injuries have been so many and so ultimately fatal, if it weren't for osteoporosis?

Mom was only 78 when she died. She was in perfect health except for osteoporosis. The accident tore my foot off my leg bone, but the seat belt saved me from crashing into the steering wheel. The seat belt, however, didn't save my mother. Instead, it may have killed her by breaking so many of her bones and causing so many internal injuries. I'm positive I had a couple cracked ribs in that same accident. My mother's rib cage was shattered, causing respiratory distress, internal injuries, and septicemia.

She began treatment to prevent more bone loss. She walked on a treadmill each day for 30 minutes because physical, weight-bearing exercise builds bones. She got at least 15 minutes of sunlight each day for Vitamin D., which builds strong bones. She also faithfully ate all the milk products her physician prescribed so that her body would get the required amount of calcium. She had no idea that too much protein can actually cause calcium loss—not gain! It would have been better if she got her calcium from green leafy vegetables.

Osteoporosis affects 25 million people (most are women) in the United States, and yet most doctors don't screen for it. Calcium loss in bones begins around age 30, but it accelerates after menopause when the body quits producing estrogen—that's why many physicians recommend replacement therapy.

The scary thing is that osteoporosis sneaks up on you. Therapy can help rebuild remaining bone, but the intricate honeycomb pattern that makes bones both light and strong can never be restored. I wish my mom had known all of this years before.

Don't let osteoporosis or Christ's second coming sneak up on you like a thief in the night!

Taken from the book, *Fit For Ever*