

# Osteoporosis—Not for Women Only

by J. Jeffrey Ball, M.D.



May is Osteoporosis Month, and, as such, it is an excellent time to review information about this major public health problem. Many have heard of osteoporosis, but few understand its meaning, scope and impact on their health. Hopefully, after reading this article, you will be motivated to reevaluate your own lifestyle and habits as well as talk to your doctor or provider about what you can do to prevent or treat this disease.

Osteoporosis is the most common bone disease in

humans. It is a silent disease until it is complicated by fractures. It is characterized by low bone mass, deterioration of bone tissue and disruption of bone architecture, compromised bone strength, and an increase in the risk of fracture. Osteoporosis is an intermediate outcome for fractures and is a risk factor for fractures just as hypertension is for stroke. Osteoporosis affects numerous people of both sexes and all races. It is estimated that more than 10 million Americans have osteoporosis and an additional 33 million have low bone density of the hip.

Fractures and their complications are the relevant clinical outcome of osteoporosis. The most common fractures are those of the spine, hip and wrist. These fractures may be followed by full recovery; however, chronic pain, disability or death may also occur. Psychological symptoms such as depression and loss of self-esteem can occur as patients grapple with pain, physical limitations, and lifestyle and cosmetic changes. Dependency associated with these fractures often strain interpersonal relationships and social roles for patients and their families.

A patient with a hip fracture has a 10-20 percent chance of death within the first year and a 10 percent chance of another osteoporosis-related fracture within the first year. Up to 25 percent of hip fracture patients require long-term nursing home care, and 60 percent never regain their pre-fracture level of independence. Spinal fractures also increase mortality and can cause significant complications including back pain, height loss and kyphosis.

The economic toll of osteoporosis-related fractures creates a heavy burden. Over 432,000 hospital admissions, almost 2.5 million medical office visits and 180,000 nursing home admissions occur annually in the United States due to fractures. An estimated \$7 billion was spent by our health care system in 2005 as a result of osteoporosis-related fractures, and this number is expected to double or triple by 2040 due to our aging population.

A person's bone is constantly being remodeled. A woman's bone mass peaks between ages 25 and 30, after which time bone is subsequently lost. This shift in greater bone removal than bone formation is magnified with menopause and advancing age. The loss of bone tissue leads to disordered skeletal architecture and an increase in fracture risk. Other age-associated declines in functioning such as an increased propensity for falls magnifies the increased fracture risk.

There are numerous conditions and diseases that cause or contribute to the development of osteoporosis. These include lifestyle factors such as low calcium intake, Vitamin

D deficiency, alcohol (3 or more drinks/day), smoking and inadequate physical exercise. Certain genetic & endocrine disorders as well as gastrointestinal and hematologic (blood) disorders can predispose one to the development of osteoporosis. You should discuss with your health care provider if you are at risk. Many people forget to consider medications that place them at risk. These include anticoagulants such as heparin, glucocorticoids used to treat rheumatologic conditions or chronic lung diseases, chemotherapy drugs and anti-seizure medications.

Any condition that increases a propensity for falls should also be evaluated. Environmental factors such as low level lighting, loose throw rugs, obstacles in the walking path or slippery outdoor conditions should be considered. Medical risks include poor vision, irregular heartbeat, depression, impaired mental capacity or drops in blood pressure with standing. Poor balance, weak muscles and fear of falling also increase one's risk.

The diagnosis of osteoporosis should be established by measurement of bone mineral density (BMD), usually using a dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DEXA) scan. This technology is now used to establish or confirm a diagnosis of osteoporosis, predict future fracture risk, and monitor patients by performing serial assessments. There are numerous indications for BMD testing, but whether you qualify may be limited by your insurance, especially Medicare. Algorithms supplied by the World Health Organization (WHO) are now available to calculate the 10-year probability of a hip fracture and the 10-year probability of any major osteoporotic fracture.

Universal recommendations for all patients include (1) adequate intake of calcium and Vitamin D, (2) fall prevention and (3) avoidance of tobacco use and excessive alcohol intake. Medical therapy should be considered in appropriately selected patients after a thorough history and physical exam and appropriate testing. There are safe and effective therapies available but discuss with your provider whether one is right for you. The National Osteoporosis Foundation provides excellent material for your review.

*Dr. Ball is a graduate of Mississippi State University. He obtained his degree in medicine from the University of Mississippi; completed both his residency and internship at the University of Florida College Of Medicine in Gainesville. He is a fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and is Board Certified American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Dr. Ball's memberships include the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Tennessee Medical Association and the Consolidated Medical Assembly of West Tennessee.*

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# Women Sweep the Emerging Business Awards

When the Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce Emerging Business Awards were presented on February 4, women stole the show. With the exception of husband-wife partnership of Eddlemon and Eddlemon, all of the businesses are women-owned. The others were Chiropractic Associates of Jackson, Pearson Safety Services, Polly Brasher, CPA and TSS Industrial Packaging, LLC.

"Women are powerful forces in today's business world and women-owned businesses are vital to our local economy" stated Lisa Webb with the Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce.

In preparation for this section, we discovered that Jenci Spradlin with TSS is more than a partner in an industrial thread sales company; she is a writer as well. She interviewed each winner and wrote their story.

Nationally, according to the Center for Women's Business Research, women-owned firms account for 41% of all privately held firms. For the past two decades, majority women-owned firms have continued to grow at around two times the rate of all firms (42% vs. 24%). With this trend continuing, we can expect to see more women-owned businesses.



## Polly Brasher, CPA

Unlike a lot of women who struggle to find their passion and niche in life, Polly Brasher found her calling after taking an accounting class in high school. "I always had a love and gift for math," says Polly, "and that class really inspired me to pursue an education in accounting at Union University."

After 13 years of public accounting experience, many spent sharpening her skills with a larger accounting services firm, Polly started her own CPA business in June of 2005 with the support and encouragement of friends and family. "The support of my husband was essential; otherwise, I could not have made this big step in my career. I also leaned on friends, like attorney Nancy Choate, who had started her own law firm, as well as other CPA colleagues who gave me the confidence boost that I needed."

Polly offers small businesses complete accounting services such as payroll and vendor checks, budgeting, tax filing, and compiling and reviewing financial statements. She also provides individuals, businesses, estates, and trusts with traditional tax services. Running her own business is extremely rewarding; she especially enjoys working with her clients. "It's easier for me to develop one-on-one relationships with my clients now that I have my own company. I know that I have the freedom and opportunity to offer the best service possible."

Much can be learned by the younger generation from Polly's professional journey. "Some students take what they are learning in college for granted and fail to make the most of the opportunities they have. The leadership skills I acquired during my time at Union University definitely helped build the confidence I needed to open my own business."

Whether that confidence and encouragement comes from family, friends, experiences, or winning awards, Polly knows that she's on the right path. "My clients can trust and respect my opinion because I'm a person of honesty and integrity. I can truly get behind what I'm doing, and I enjoy the ability to work in partnership with my clients to help them achieve their financial goals."



## Chiropractic Associates of Jackson

Dr. Gina Heathcott's perspective on health inspires the care she gives her patients and the way she manages her professional and personal life. The owner of Chiropractic Associates of Jackson, she is an expert in advanced gentle chiropractic care. She focuses on the long term health and wellness of her patients without the use of drugs or surgery.

Having always desired a career in the healthcare industry, Gina witnessed firsthand the anxiety and frustration that can emotionally cripple those seeking medical care for themselves or a loved one, when, in her senior year at Union University, her grandmother began experiencing trouble walking. The process of healing, to Gina, seemed driven less by the physician's care, and more by the prescribed pharmaceuticals or the insurance company's coverage plan.

It wasn't until her grandmother sought treatment from a chiropractor that her quality of life dramatically improved, exposing Gina to a more hands-on approach to healthcare. "What we traditionally call 'healthcare' is really just symptom care, masking the underlying problem with drugs or quick surgical fixes" says Dr. Gina. "Chiropractic care looks at the entire body and its structure to not only relieve symptomatic pain, but to maintain good health over the long term."

Dr. Gina is very attuned to her patient's healthcare goals and needs, and spends a lot of time listening to and educating them to the benefits of gentle chiropractic care. "While I don't take a 'cookie cutter' approach to the care I deliver, I have molded my technique toward my patients and what has worked best for them."

While Dr. Gina strives to ensure the overall good health and comfort of her patients, she prescribes the opposite for herself. "I constantly reassess my business practices because I do not want to be comfortable in the success I have achieved, nor do I want to assume that people know who I am and what I do. Being uncomfortable keeps me focused on reaching my goals and meeting the constantly changing needs of my patients. For me, if you are comfortable in your business, you aren't growing."

Dr. Gina's focus and passion for her life's work is fueled by the hope she delivers on a daily basis. "Chiropractic care can sometimes be people's last resort, but through patient education, I'd like it to be the first step people make in taking control of their health. Hope is a powerful thing, and as a non-evasive and effective alternative, I'm lucky and blessed enough to see hope in others through the chiropractic care I deliver."

Chiropractic Associates of Jackson is making a special offer exclusively to readers of the Women's Journal as a way of inspiring women to take control of their healthcare. If you mention this article, you can receive a consultation, exam, x-rays, and report from Dr. Gina for only \$20. Call 731-661-0390 to find out if chiropractic care can help you. "There is hope."



## Eddleman & Eddleman

It should come as no surprise that Lee Eddleman believes goal-setting and planning are two of the most important keys to the success of the company she and her husband, Adrian, founded in June, 2005. The company, Eddleman & Eddleman, LLC, helps clients realize their objectives, goals, and dreams through unbiased, fiduciary financial and investment advice.

"In owning a business, you've got to set goals and put pen to paper to attain them," says Lee. "Most people, in life and in business, don't set goals. They settle. They don't push themselves, but sometimes this is because they are simply overwhelmed by all the information and choices that are out there."

As investment advisors, Eddleman & Eddleman's services focus on client education instead of brokering a specific investment product. "We work exclusively on behalf of our clients to provide research, education, and direction for their investment decisions," continues Lee. "Our planning and advice is strictly fee-based, so our objectivity is not compromised by commissions, referral fees, or other sorts of compensation." Lee believes that taking small steps over a long period of time can produce huge results if people are willing to make sacrifices and prioritize.

Indeed, she and Adrian have followed their own advice in building their company. "We knew there were sacrifices we'd need to make to build this business, but we also knew that over time, those sacrifices would pay off." Particularly in her role as a wife and mother, Lee found it challenging at the beginning to manage time spent working on the business with time spent with her family, but now she enjoys more of the freedom of time that can come with working for herself.

Working side-by-side with her husband is also an added benefit. "We enjoy working together and our personalities really compliment one another. Adrian is a big picture thinker, while I am more of a detail-oriented person." Lee credits Adrian's ongoing support and partnership with her in the business with helping her weather the self-doubt that many women business owners often struggle to overcome.

While winning an Emerging Business Award will certainly open doors for the couple in the Jackson area, it really stands as a testament to their commitment to goal-setting and planning. "We feel like we've made some good decisions and we're moving in the right direction," says Lee. "This award just proves that all these years have been worth it."



## Pearson Safety Services

Donna Pearson Chadwick's enthusiasm for what she does is obvious. As president of Pearson Safety Services, Donna and her staff provide a full spectrum of safety services to clients throughout Tennessee, including developing safety programs and training, and conducting risk management assessments.

Her perspective on safety is a combination of more than 20 years of professional and personal experiences that uniquely focus on safety as an individual commitment, rather than safety as an employer mandate. "My motivation, and the motivation of my staff, has little to do with simply making money for our company," says Chadwick. "We firmly believe that what we're doing will save lives. We know that if we can encourage and train every employee of every client we serve to make a personal commitment to safety, they will get to go home to their loved ones at the end of the day."

This sincerity and dedication has fueled the growth and success of Pearson Safety Services far beyond Chadwick's expectations. The company was formed in July, 2005 as an affiliate of Jabezco Industrial Group. That others put their trust and support behind Chadwick is no surprise, but as a woman-owned business, that support does take its toll. "I'm aware on a daily basis of the ultimate responsibility I have to provide professionally, financially, and emotionally for those that have provided for me, whether that be my employees, my clients, my family, or those in my support network," shares Chadwick.

Donna believes that having a self-motivated personality is essential to her success as a woman-owned business, as well as developing the ability to overcome self-doubt, which is something she sees women struggling with more so than their male counterparts. "Women who are thinking about starting their own business need to understand that you must get into something that you believe in one hundred percent. Don't get into something simply for the money, because that will ultimately not sustain you when times get tough," explains Chadwick. "Use your God-given gifts. Love what you do, and live always by the Golden Rule." For a woman who trains others to "play it safe," her wisdom for those looking to follow in her footsteps might just take some of the risk out of their journey.



## TSS Industrial Packaging, LLC

When the three owners of TSS Industrial Packaging tell others about their business, they usually get quizzical looks followed by an "aha" moment. "We're a distributor of industrial sewing threads, crepe sewing tape, slip sheets and other packaging related products," says CEO Michelle Boyd, who has spent the bulk of her professional career in this industry. For those outside the industry, it's easier to explain by example. "You know that piece of thread that is sewn on the top of a dog food bag?" asks Boyd. "In a nutshell, that's what we sell."

That someone can operate a business off a product most people fail to notice is surprising to many, even Boyd's two partners, Jessi Pruett and Jenci Spradlin. The trio founded the company in August, 2006, only a week after Boyd's decades-long sales stint with a North Carolina-based thread manufacturer had been terminated. "Jenci and I didn't know anything about thread at the beginning," says Pruett, CFO and legal counsel, "but we had all become incredibly close during my battle with breast cancer. We immediately turned Michelle's loss into an opportunity to challenge ourselves in another way. If we could handle cancer, we knew we could handle anything."

TSS has focused their efforts on what they view as their strongest asset: personal service and attention. "Business is about relationships, and Michelle



Left to right: Michelle Boyd,  
Jessi Pruett and Jenci  
Spradlin

had built this really loyal customer base over the course of her career," says Spradlin, CMO. "Those customers had a relationship with Michelle as a person, not as individuals just to fit into some corporate mold, because you can't build long-term genuine relationships on pretense."

Admittedly, sticking with a "to-thine-own-self-be-true" philosophy can at times feel counterintuitive in a world where technology increasingly eliminates the need for human interaction. "We certainly fight the urge to retreat," says Boyd, "but ultimately, you've got to come to a place where you can be proud of who you are and what you believe. It's probably the most important lesson I can ever teach my children." Indeed, in an industry where most products and services appear identical, TSS's passion for who they are and what they do truly stands out from the crowd.