

Body fat linked to reduced fracture risk for women

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Photo: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Higher body fat mass is associated with a reduced risk of fracture among women, but not men, according to a study published in the May issue of the *Journal of Internal Medicine*.

(HealthDay) -- Higher body fat mass is associated with a reduced risk of fracture among women, but not men, according to a study published in the May issue of the *Journal of Internal Medicine*.

Alireza Moayyeri, M.D., from the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom, and colleagues examined the association between percentage body fat and the risk of hip and osteoporotic fracture for 14,789 participants (6,470 men; aged 42 to 82 years at baseline) from the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer cohort.

The researchers found that, during an average follow-up of 8.7 years,

556 participants suffered a fracture, including 184 hip fractures. Among [women](#), but not men, the risk of hip fracture decreased linearly with increasing percentage of body fat. After adjusting for confounding variables and bone density, as measured by heel broadband ultrasound attenuation (BUA), a 10 percent increased percentage of body fat correlated with a reduced risk of hip fracture (hazard ratio [HR], 0.56; 95 percent confidence interval [CI], 0.39 to 0.79 in women; and HR, 0.92; 95 percent CI, 0.39 to 2.21 in men). The effect size in women was roughly equal to a five year age difference or one standard deviation increased BUA. The association between any type of fracture and percentage of body fat was nonlinear and negative among women, but not men.

"The percentage of [body fat](#) appears to predict [hip fracture](#) risk in women with an effect size comparable to that of [bone density](#) as measured by heel ultrasound," the authors write.

More information: [DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2796.2011.02443.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2796.2011.02443.x)

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