

Asthma sufferers may be prone to bone loss

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Some of the 26 million Americans with asthma may also be prone to bone loss. According to a study published today in the May issue of *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*, the scientific journal of the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, there seems to be association between asthma and a decrease in bone mineral density.

"We know prolonged use of corticosteroids in the treatment of asthma is a risk factor of osteoporosis, but we haven't had definite data showing the relationship between asthma itself and bone loss," said Jae-Woo Jung, MD, lead study author. "This study has shown a meaningful association between the two conditions even in the absence of previous oral corticosteroid use."

Researchers in Seoul, South Korea studied more than 7,000 patients, 433 of which had airway hyperresponsiveness (AHR) or asthma. Lumber spine and femur bone density was significantly lower in those with AHR or asthma, than those without the conditions.

"It is difficult to pinpoint the cause of [bone loss](#) in this subset of patients," said allergist John Oppenheimer, MD, *Annals* associate editor and ACAAI fellow. "Reasons can include corticosteroid use, low levels of vitamin D or even race. This research has unveiled findings that need be further studied."

According to the ACAAI, while oral corticosteroids can be associated with adverse effects, such as osteoporosis, this medication is the most effective in treating asthma. Allergists will always use the lowest

effective dose of oral corticosteroid, if it is required, and inhaled rather than oral medication whenever possible.

"Asthma is a serious disease that can be life-threatening," said Dr. Oppenheimer. "It is important that those with asthma and other breathing problems continue their prescribed treatment. It is also imperative that allergists discuss the potential of the disease itself or as a consequence of therapy in [asthma](#) sufferers."

Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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