

Blood marker may predict postmenopausal women's risk of bone fractures

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In a study published in the *Journal of Bone and Mineral Research*, blood tests that detect fragments of a protein secreted by bone cells helped to predict fracture risk in postmenopausal women, independently of bone mineral density, bone turnover markers, and other measures of bone health.

In the study of 695 women, high levels of the fragments were seen in women who later developed fractures compared with those who did not.

The fragments come from a protein named periostin, which is broken down by an enzyme in bone called cathepsin K.

"The periostin fragments' strong association with incident fractures is largely independent of other bone measures, arguing that they may reflect additional bone properties related to bone quality and strength," said Dr. Nicolas Bonnet, lead author of the study.

More information: Nicolas Bonnet et al, Serum Levels of a Cathepsin-K Generated Periostin Fragment Predict Incident Low-Trauma Fractures in Postmenopausal Women Independently of BMD and FRAX, *Journal of Bone and Mineral Research* (2017). [DOI: 10.1002/JBMR.3203](https://doi.org/10.1002/JBMR.3203)

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