

Study finds no evidence linking reflux medicines to bone fractures

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Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs)—medications commonly used to treat heartburn, acid reflux, and ulcers—have been linked with potentially serious side effects including a possible increased risk of bone fractures. In a new *Alimentary Pharmacology & Therapeutics* study, however, patients with Barrett's esophagus—a long-term complication of acid reflux—who took high doses of PPIs for prolonged periods were no more likely to have bone fractures or evidence of bone thinning (osteopenia or osteoporosis) than people in the general population.

The study included 521 patients with Barrett's esophagus. Independent risk factors for osteoporotic fractures included older age, female gender, and greater co-morbidities.

"Patients with Barrett's esophagus represent a unique population for studying the association between PPI use and osteoporosis-related fractures, due to their treatment with long-term and high-dose acid suppressive therapy with PPIs to control reflux," wrote the authors of the study.

More information: S. Kumar et al. Incidence and predictors of osteoporotic fractures in patients with Barrett's oesophagus: a population-based nested case-control study, *Alimentary Pharmacology & Therapeutics* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/apt.14345](https://doi.org/10.1111/apt.14345)

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