

# Bone Mineral Densitometry [DEXA]

Dual Energy X-ray Absorption (DEXA) Bone Densitometry is the preferred method used to measure the density of bone in diagnosing and assessing osteoporosis.

## The Procedure

A DEXA scan is a simple procedure.

Two scans are performed, one of the hip and the other of the lower spine. These two areas are most commonly used as they are the first areas to be affected by osteoporosis as well as being the areas most at risk from a fracture.

If osteoporosis can be detected and treated early then the risk of a fracture as a result of osteoporosis is decreased significantly. The age of the patient is of no matter, patients in their 70's can still gain benefit from a diagnosis.

## Preparation

There is no preparation for this procedure. It is recommended that you wear clothing without metal zippers or clips as these can interfere with the image. If you have a hip replacement you should inform the technician, as that hip cannot be used for scanning purposes.

“... patients in their 70's can still gain benefit from a diagnosis.”

## When you come for the test

You will be placed on a bed – underneath is an x-ray source that produces very low energy x-rays. The scanning arm, which houses the x-ray detectors, gradually passes over you as the scan is performed.

The detectors read the energy level of the x-ray beam after it has passed through your body and thus can calculate the density of the bone.

The technician then manipulates this information with a specialised computer program to produce a representative image of the area with calculations of bone density and fracture risk.

## Are you pregnant?

Even though the radiation levels are extremely low, a DEXA study still uses ionising radiation and so is not recommended for women who are or could be pregnant.

To ensure that we are providing you with the best service, at any stage of the examination if you have any questions or concerns, please ask our staff.

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We also welcome any feedback.



## Appointment

Please phone or SMS our friendly booking service on **1300 788 508** or request an appointment online [www.canberraimaging.com.au](http://www.canberraimaging.com.au)

## What to bring

Please bring the following items with you to your appointment:

- Your referral
- Any relevant films
- Medicare card
- Pension / Health Care card

## Your results

Your doctor will receive fast and convenient electronic access to your reports and images. Canberra Imaging Group strongly advise that you return to your referring doctor in order for your doctor to discuss your results with you.