Thanks for Your Support!

As we reflect on the past twelve months and look forward to 2012, the National Osteoporosis Foundation would like to thank all of our loyal contributors. While some of you have given your time and some have made monetary donations or given other resources, we are all working together to prevent osteoporosis and broken bones and protect the 44 million Americans affected by this disease.

It is no exaggeration to say that we cannot succeed without you. It takes the coming together of like-minded people to bring about change. Thanks to your support, here's a snapshot of what we have accomplished in the last year:

- Continued our series of free, educational webinars reaching more than 1,000 participants with direct access to the nation's leading bone health experts. This year's live, interactive programs focused on safe yoga and Pilates for those with osteoporosis and balancing the benefits and risks of different osteoporosis treatment options.
- Educated more than 500 healthcare professionals on osteoporosis and bone health through our International Symposium on Osteoporosis held in May.

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NOF believes that for most people at risk of fracture, bisphosphonates are an acceptable treatment option. The group of bisphosphonate medicines under consideration includes: alendronate (Fosamax®), ibandronate (Atelvia™), risedronate (Actonel®), and zoledronic acid (Reclast®). The FDA is looking into the potential long-term effects of these medicines, but the group was unable to agree on a clear recommendation at this time.

The drugs are widely used to treat osteoporosis and prevent fractures. Less than one-half percent of people who take bisphosphonates get ONJ (Osteonecrosis of the Jaw). This rare condition affects the jawbone and can cause severe pain, infection, and bone death. While the number of people who suffer atypical femur fractures is still unknown, it is considered a more serious condition that affects the thigh bone (femur) and can cause severe pain, fracture, and disability. A small population of those taking oral bisphosphonates get ONJ.

If you take bisphosphonate medicines, talk to your healthcare provider. If you have side effects, unusual symptoms or questions about the long-term use of bisphosphonates, talk to your healthcare provider.

Recent falls are a key risk factor for osteoporotic fracture. In fact, around one-third of women and one-tenth of men age 50 or older fall each year. If you or someone you know has fallen recently, it is important to talk to your healthcare provider so that you can protect your bones and prevent another fall. If you have had a hip or wrist fracture, have a family history of osteoporosis, or have experienced loss of height, talk to your healthcare provider about the benefits of taking bisphosphonates.

To discuss the benefits and risks of bisphosphonates, two important advisory committees to the FDA recently held a meeting of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to discuss the benefits and risks of bisphosphonates.

NOF offers the following tips:

- Talk to your healthcare provider if you develop new hip or thigh pain;
- Do not smoke;
- Do not consume alcohol;
- Take daily calcium and vitamin D;
- Exercise regularly;
- Visit your healthcare provider regularly to discuss the benefits and risks of bisphosphonates;
- If you have side effects, unusual symptoms or questions about the long-term use of bisphosphonates, talk to your healthcare provider.

If you have side effects, unusual symptoms or questions about the long-term use of bisphosphonates, talk to your healthcare provider. Review all medicines with your healthcare provider every year to see if you still need them; and if you still need them, tell your healthcare provider about any changes in your health or life situation that may affect the use of your medicines.

**Visit www.nof.org/pearlsofstrength to download the Toolkit today!**
Save the Date – NOF is coming to Orlando!

Will you be there?

NOF will hold its annual meeting, the International Symposium on Osteoporosis (ISO12) in Orlando, Florida from April 25 - 28, 2012.
ISO12 is the premier scientific meeting dedicated entirely to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis. Committed to providing cutting-edge education to healthcare professionals who serve those with or at-risk of osteoporosis, ISO12 will feature many of the world’s top researchers and clinicians. Some of these same experts will address the needs of the public at our Healthy Bones, Build Them For Life™ Consumer and Patient Forum on Wednesday, April 25. Topics that will be covered at the Forum include risk factors and hidden causes of bone loss, diagnosing osteoporosis and predicting fracture risk, and diet, exercise and current treatments to prevent broken bones.

The Perfect Holiday Gift!

For years now, NOF’s Pearls of Strength® bracelet has been a reminder that just like pearls, our bones are precious. With the launch of the Generations of Strength Campaign, NOF partnered with NYC jewelry designer Robin Renzi of Me&Ro to update the bracelet with a beautiful sterling silver charm engraved with the word “LOVE” in Sanskrit.

Order your black or white pearls today for only $25 by calling (800) 231-4222 or online at www.nof.org/pearlssofstrengthcollection.
No Recommendations Yet on How Long to Take Bisphosphonate Medicines

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently held a meeting of two important advisory committees to discuss the benefits and risks of long-term bisphosphonate use. The drugs are widely used to treat osteoporosis and prevent fractures (broken bones). Many people hoped that after this meeting FDA would issue clear instructions on how long people can safely take these medicines, but the group was unable to agree on a clear recommendation that would apply to most people. The group of bisphosphonate medicines under consideration includes: alendronate (Fosamax®), ibandronate (Boniva®), risedronate (Actonel® and mAtelvia™) and zoledronic acid (Reclast®). The FDA is looking into two safety concerns associated with bisphosphonates: osteonecrosis of the jaw (ONJ) and atypical femur fractures. Less than one-half percent of the osteoporosis patients taking oral bisphosphonates get ONJ. While the number of people who suffer atypical femur fractures is also small, it is considered a more serious problem because surgery is usually needed to treat the fractures. The exact reason these conditions happen to a small population of those taking bisphosphonates is still unknown.

If you take bisphosphonate medicines, NOF offers the following tips:

- See your dentist regularly, keep your teeth and gums in good shape and do not smoke;
- Do not stop taking your medicine without approval from your healthcare provider;
- Talk to your healthcare provider if you develop new hip or thigh pain;
- Review all medicines with your healthcare provider every year to see if you still need them; and
- If you have side effects, unusual symptoms or questions about the long-term use of bisphosphonates, talk to your healthcare provider.

NOF believes that for most people at risk of fracture, bisphosphonates are an important weapon against broken bones and their benefits usually outweigh the risks. Potential for the rare adverse events of ONJ and atypical fractures should be weighed against this benefit, patient-by-patient.
Generations of Strength Campaign Update

Join the Conversation – Participate in NOF’s Generations of Strength: A Mothers and Daughters Campaign

For the first time in history, we have an opportunity to prevent and treat osteoporosis – a disease affecting 44 million Americans – by starting conversations about bone health and family history. To get these conversations started, NOF launched Generations of Strength: A Mothers and Daughters Campaign in late September. The national initiative calls on mothers and daughters to start talking with one another, their healthcare professionals and NOF about bone health, calcium, vitamin D, effective exercise and medical treatments for osteoporosis. Together, we can stop fractures before they happen and provide much-needed help and support to the most vulnerable – those who have already experienced a broken bone.

In addition to our grassroots efforts, we’re working with national committees, corporate sponsors, community groups and media partners to make osteoporosis a household name and raise $2 million in funds by the end of 2013. We have a number of campaign activities underway and need your support to reach our goals and protect future generations from this debilitating disease. Here’s a snapshot of how you can get involved.

• Participate in our Let’s Get Talking online contest by sharing a favorite moment with or memory of your mother for a chance to win a mother-daughter weekend in New York City complete with Judith Ripka shopping spree, a private Carlisle Collection shopping experience, an overnight stay at The Pierre, a Taj Hotel and more.

• Attend a Pearls of Strength® Salon Series event in a city near you or download our new Pearls of Strength® Toolkit and plan an event of your own.

• Purchase a Pearls of Strength® bracelet to benefit the campaign.

• Join our advocacy network to participate in campaign activities and briefings on Capitol Hill and in your local district.

• Spread the word to those in your social and professional networks by liking NOF on Facebook, following us on Twitter and encouraging your friends to do the same.

Visit www.nof.org/startaconversation to learn more about the campaign and join the conversation.
Advocates Visit Capitol Hill to Speak About Osteoporosis and Bone Health

On September 14, 2011, NOF brought teams of patients and health professionals from five states, prepare to visit Members of Congress as part of NOF’s Strong Voices for Strong Bones on Capitol Hill event. Pictured left to right are: Roberta Biegel (NOF), Michael DiMuzzio, Ph.D. (IL), Carol Gilchrist (FL), Fay Stern (IL), Rebecca Yates, CNM (NC), Dan Heyerdahl, M.D. (WI), David Ilkerd (PA), Beth Griffin (NC), Margaret Ilkerd (PA), Melanie Helfman, M.D. (FL) and Bea Duque Long (NOF).

On behalf of patients, family members, caregivers and people at-risk for the disease. They shared personal stories about living with osteoporosis or serving as a caregiver and asked Congress to take action to protect their constituents’ bone health by protecting patient access to osteoporosis testing, creating a national bone health program and increasing funding for research.

Please let us know if you’re interested in visiting your Member of Congress in Washington, DC or closer to home in their district office and we’ll work with you to plan a meeting. Or join NOF’s Strong Voices for Strong Bones advocacy network today.

Sign up at www.nof.org/advocacy
A Gift from Mothers to Daughters

On Monday, September 26, NOF hosted nearly 200 guests and raised more than $85,000 at the 4th annual A Gift from Mothers and Daughters luncheon in New York City. We honored Freda Lewis-Hall, M.D. with the Paul G. Rogers Leadership Award and Lisa Oz with the Generation Award – both for their commitment to women’s health and wellness. The luncheon also marked the launch of Generations of Strength: A Mothers and Daughters Campaign and the campaign’s Let's Get Talking online contest. Bestselling author and campaign National Honorary Committee Chair, Gail Sheehy, also spoke about her family history of osteoporosis and the importance of establishing an ongoing dialogue with those you love about bone health. Next year’s fundraising luncheon will take place on September 24, 2012.

To learn more about NOF’s meetings and events, call (800) 231-4222 or visit www.nof.org.
Thanks for Your Support (continued)

- Made enhancements for our 56 active support groups including appointing a national support group leader to mentor current leaders and recruit new ones, implementing quarterly conference calls to foster the exchange of ideas and information among leaders and posting an updated electronic resource manual to help leaders facilitate successful groups.

- Successfully launched Generations of Strength: A Mothers and Daughters Campaign, a new awareness and fundraising initiative encouraging mothers, daughters and women across the country to start conversations about bone health and family history with their friends, loved ones, healthcare providers and NOF.

- Introduced a new Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Toolkit with posters, factsheets, bookmarks and other downloadable items to help raise awareness for osteoporosis and bone health among patients, caregivers and families in communities across the country.

- Advocated for the introduction of two bills in Congress to improve access to state education and awareness programs on osteoporosis and help increase patient access to osteoporosis testing.

- Spearheaded the establishment of the National Bone Health Alliance (NBHA), a public-private partnership bringing together non-profit and private sector members (in addition to liaisons representing the National Institutes of Health and U.S. Food and Drug Administration) to work toward a shared vision of improving the overall health and quality of life for all Americans by enhancing their bone health.

While we are proud of these accomplishments, we will not stop until osteoporosis – a largely preventable and treatable disease – is a thing of the past. Your continued support is critical in this ongoing effort. This holiday season and into 2012, please ask yourself how you can get involved, get educated and start a conversation to prevent osteoporosis and protect those already affected by the disease. To learn more, visit www.nof.org.
**ask the EXPERT**

**Q** I recently heard about a vibrating platform that can help people with osteoporosis. Does this product really work and is it safe?

**A** The use of vibrating platforms to improve bone health, also known as whole body vibration (WBV), has become an interesting area of study in recent years. During WBV a person stands or exercises on a vibrating platform that transfers energy from the platform to the body. Some experts hypothesize that WBV effects bones in a way that is similar to the benefits of weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercise. People can use these platforms in their homes and in fitness facilities, as well as in physical therapy and rehabilitation settings.

We understand that most people are anxious to know if WBV works and if it is safe, but unfortunately, we don't have the answers to these questions yet. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) recently conducted a review of 12 studies investigating the potential impact of WBV on the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis. According to AHRQ’s review, the data on WBV is too weak to draw any conclusions at this time. Randomized controlled trials with a long follow-up period will help us learn whether this type of therapy can be used safely and successfully. It’s also important to keep in mind that these devices cannot be used to replace the need for calcium, vitamin D, regular exercise and prescribed osteoporosis treatment.