

## What to Expect When You Have a Bone Density Test (Osteoporosis Screening)

### What is a Bone Density Test?

Bone density tests are simple, safe, and painless. At Southeastern Primary Care Providers, we use a method of testing bone density that is called DEXA (Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry). DEXA scans are extremely precise and are one of the most accurate methods available for measuring bone density. Using ultra-low dose X-ray, the DEXA machine scans and measures bone mineral density at various parts of the body, usually the lumbar spine and hips. **This highly sensitive test enables us to identify bone loss early** and determine whether you are at risk for fracture, by comparing your bone density to your own age group and to a younger age group. We can also monitor your response to treatments for osteoporosis by checking your bone density regularly.

### How Long Will the Exam Take?

Your DEXA scan will take approximately thirty minutes.

### How Should I Prepare for a Bone Density Test?

There is very little preparation required. The chart below will list situations in which the test will not be performed, what you should wear for the test, and answers to commonly asked questions about the test.

- If pregnant the exam will not be performed.
- Patient weight limit is 250 pounds.
- Wear sweat pants (or elastic waist pants or shorts), and a T-shirt. Shoes will be removed for exam.
- Do not wear jewelry, hearing aids, belt buckles, zippers, snaps, or buttons.
- Females should wear a sports bra. Bras with under wires will need to be removed.
- It is okay to eat anytime before or after the exam.

### What Should I do After my Bone Density Test?

No special instructions. Expect results in seven to ten days after your DEXA scan.