Docs: Weak bones limit physical strength, impact mental abilities

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LUCKNOW: Weak bones not only limit your physical strength but mental abilities too get adversely affected, said doctors while sharing tips for healthy life, on World Osteoporosis Day (WOD), on Wednesday.

Osteoporosis is a progressive bone disease in which the bone density decreases due to the leaching of calcium, the building block of bones. "Osteoporosis gradually makes the bones weak from its peak density, for women post menopause and in men after 60 years of age but if the bone weakening progression is aggravated before that it makes life tough," said Dr Ashish Kumar, HoD, sports medicine at the King George's Medical University (KGMU).

He said, "In chronic stage, a little fast twist can fracture the neck bone or a jump of one step on stairs can break even the strongest bone in the body, the femur (leg) bone." "Ironically, 80% of the affected persons come to know that they are suffering from osteoporosis when the fracture takes place," said Dr Abhishek Shukla, secretary-general, Association of International Doctors.

"The mortality risk is up to 25% higher with a hip fracture in a person suffering from osteoporosis. This is due to related illness that comes to a bed-ridden person after the fracture. Low immunity and high chance of infection cause high mortality rate," said Dr Arun Pandey, an endocrinologist, who was delivering a lecture on WOD at the Aastha Geriatric Centre.

"A bone mass density test every two years after menopause for women and after 60 years for men is one way of getting to know your osteoporosis status," said Dr Pandey. "Eating foods rich in calcium and doing exercises that your doctor recommends are easy ways for keeping not just the bones but the entire body healthy," said Dr Sandeep Kapoor, director, Healthcity hospital.

Osteoporosis can reduce height too

A significant sign of osteoporosis is 'body kyphosis' which is forward rounding of the back. A person, particularly women, suffering from a chronic stage of osteoporosis, can be seen walking with the body bent forward, often among older women. Thus, the height of the person also appears reduced.