

THE BONE WINDOW



The Bone Window: What Menopause Takes Before You Notice

The fastest bone loss of your life happens in the years around your last period. It's silent, it's measurable, and almost nobody is scanned in time.

Swipe

THE OLD BELIEF

Osteoporosis isn't an old-age disease

It doesn't arrive at eighty. It's largely built in your fifties, in a window that opens before your periods even stop.

THE TIMING

The fastest loss happens before you'd expect a scan

The annual rate of bone loss is highest from about one year before your final period through two years after it, while you're still calling it the change.

THE COUNTERINTUITIVE FACT

Most fractures don't come from the worst scores

Women scoring at or below -2.5 (osteoporosis) have the higher individual risk. But because far more women sit in the milder -1.0 to -2.5 range, more fractures happen there.

THE EVIDENCE

Hip fracture, cut by a third

In the Women's Health Initiative, combined estrogen plus progestin brought hip fracture down to a hazard ratio of 0.66: 10 versus 15 hip fractures per 10,000 person-years.

THE DENSITY DATA

Bone rose under treatment, fell under placebo

In the PEPI trial, bone density rose 3.5 to 5.0 percent at the spine and 1.7 percent at the hip in every treatment group, while the placebo group's density fell.

THE HONEST LIMIT

HRT is not the first-line osteoporosis drug

If you already have osteoporosis, bisphosphonates like alendronate are first-line. But if you're already on hormone therapy for symptoms at an adequate dose, your bone is usually already covered.

THE BOTTOM LINE



A scan doesn't build bone. It tells you your time left.

If you're in the transition now, this is the window. It doesn't stay open. Talk to a qualified doctor about whether a scan or hormone therapy is right for you.