

# Osteoporosis spinal fractures

Osteoporosis is a painless process caused by calcium loss in your bones. It makes them more fragile and more likely to break. Osteoporosis spinal bone fractures are common: the vertebrae squash down on themselves and can affect your quality of life drastically. They are sometimes quite painful, but they often go unnoticed and the only visible signs are a curved back and height loss.

Depending on the type of fracture and whether it is dorsal (in your middle back) or lumbar (in your lower back), your doctor will tell you whether you should wear some kind of brace or corset, how long to wear it and what activity you can do during this time. Your doctor will also prescribe the medications necessary to relieve the pain.

## What else can you do?

Initially, during the first few weeks, your doctor will tell you to get plenty of bedrest and also to change your position regularly. You'll spend some time in bed, but, depending on how well you tolerate the pain you'll also spend time sitting and walking about with your corset on. Chairs should be high to make it easier for you to stand up and sit down.

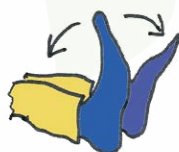
When you are in bed you won't wear your corset and you can do a series of exercises to prevent bedrest from causing other problems:

### ● Breathing exercises:

Put a pillow under your knees, one hand on your chest and the other one on your belly. Breathe in and out several times, using your abdomen (diaphragmatic breathing) and filling your rib cage with air. Wearing the corset for so many hours may reduce your breathing capacity.



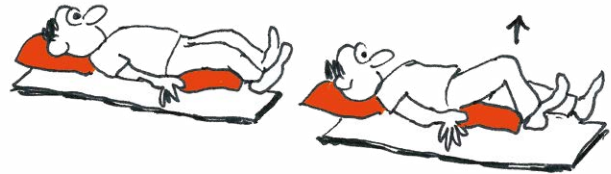
### ● Exercises to improve your circulation: Move



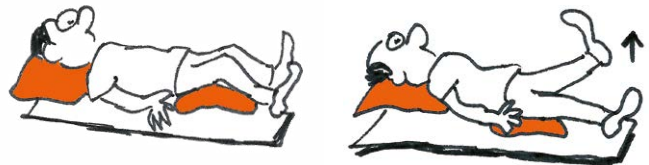
your ankles (flex and stretch) as if to a beat, to stimulate blood circulation.

### ● Exercises to tone your muscles:

- Lying on the bed, bend your leg up towards your chest as you slide your foot up over the bed.



- Lying on the bed with a pillow under your knees, press one knee down against the pillow as you point your foot towards your body. Hold the position for 6 seconds, then rest. Repeat with the other leg.



- Lying on the bed with a pillow under your knees, clench your buttocks, tensing the muscles, for 6 seconds, then rest. Don't lift your buttocks off the bed.



Gradually take short walks, with good posture and short steps to control the movement properly.

Even though you are wearing the corset, avoid lifting weights, making jerky movements or movements that involve bending or stretching your upper body.

When your doctor says that you can lead a normal life again, the weakness of your bones (osteoporosis) makes it advisable to strengthen your muscles and improve your general mobility so that you avoid further falls and stay healthy.