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facts about osteosarcopenia in gerontological physiotherapy



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Osteosarcopenia is an emerging 'geriatric giant'



Osteosarcopenia is the concurrent presence of osteoporosis and sarcopenia and its health and economic implications are expected to rise. Sarcopenia is defined as:

- loss of muscle mass and reduced muscle strength
- poor physical performance
- loss of muscle strength in hand grip and sit-to-stand test.

3

Early recognition and intervention improve outcomes



Clinical practice guidelines for non-pharmacological management of osteoporosis recommend:

- early detection and intervention
- DEXA analysis for bone mass and muscle mass
- early screening for decreasing bone density and muscle loss in younger individuals
- management programs to be implemented before functional decline occurs.

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Physiotherapists play a key role in managing osteosarcopenia



Physiotherapy management of osteoporosis and sarcopenia must:

- target bone mineral density
- increase muscle strength and physical performance
- improve balance and reduce falls risk
- include high-intensity, weight-bearing, impact-loading exercises.

2

Osteosarcopenia is a subset of frailty



Osteosarcopenia is associated with lifestyle-related risk factors such as:

- low protein intake and low levels of calcium and vitamin D
- low levels of physical activity
- smoking and alcohol consumption
- comorbid conditions, eg, osteoarthritis, cancer, endocrine dysfunction
- non-modifiable risk factors including older age, female gender and Caucasian race.

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Multidisciplinary input is vital for holistic and individualised management



Osteosarcopenia screening is part of a broader geriatric assessment, potentially involving geriatricians, dietitians, occupational therapists and psychologists. Recommendations may include:

- smoking cessation
- alcohol restriction
- adequate intake of vitamin D, calcium and protein
- pharmacotherapy.

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