

# Anorexia and Bone Health

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## Background:

- Anorexia Nervosa is a complex psychiatric condition with high mortality.
- Many healthcare professionals in Primary Care are anxious when managing the associated risk in the community.
- After initial assessment and referral to specialist services, on discharge Primary Care clinicians follow NICE guidance which refers to medical monitoring.

## Anorexia Nervosa & Osteoporosis:

- While an association between bone health and anorexia nervosa is generally accepted there is very little guidance available.
- Consequently, for those who remain underweight with irregular periods or amenorrhoea, there poses a risk of deterioration in bone density which can be irreversible and can lead to further complex health problems for these individuals in the future.

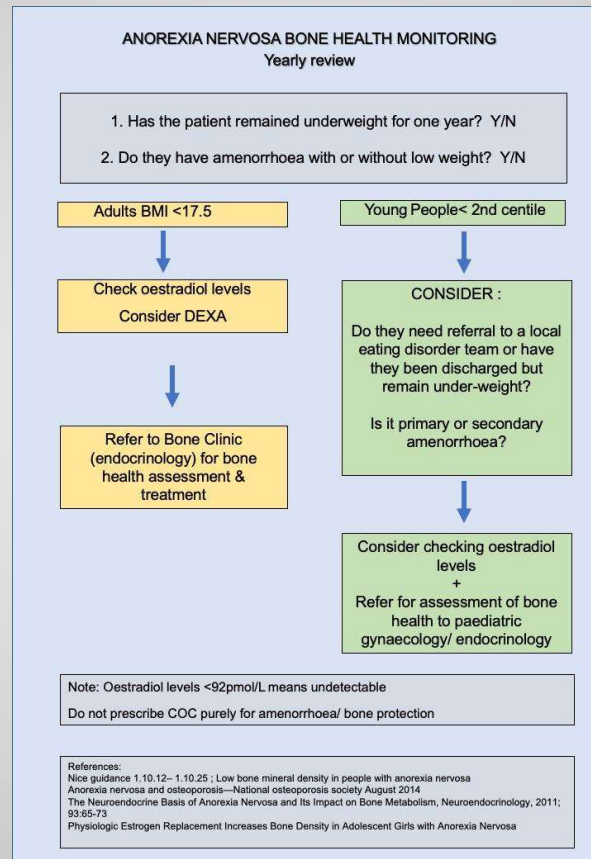
## Methods:

The methodology included a combination of:

- A literature review of the association of osteoporosis in anorexia nervosa
- Local protocols (specialist eating disorder services and secondary care specialities including endocrinology and gynaecology)
- NICE guidance
- These were used to formulate a flow chart for monitoring and managing bone health for use in primary care.

## References:


1. NICE guidance 1.10.12– 1.10.25 ; Low bone mineral density in people with anorexia nervosa
2. Anorexia nervosa and osteoporosis—National osteoporosis society August 2014
3. The Neuroendocrine Basis of Anorexia Nervosa and Its Impact on Bone Metabolism, Neuroendocrinology, 2011; 93:65-73
4. Physiologic Estrogen Replacement Increases Bone Density in Adolescent Girls with Anorexia Nervosa



With special thanks to RecoveryEducation.co.uk for inspiring me to complete this piece of work.

**Do you**

Have a history of anorexia with low weight  
together with irregular or no periods?



If so, your bones could be  
at risk.....

Speak now with your GP  
We can help you...

**NHS**

## Conclusions:

- A proposed protocol for health professionals to support the monitoring of bone health in anorexia nervosa.
- A simplified poster was for display in Primary Care settings to encourage affected individuals to seek appropriate medical help.
- A proposal for a pilot project in local GP surgeries

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