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ELECTRONIC PHOTO AVAILABLE (rjennings@excelsahealth.org)

Karen Kane, an imaging technologist who specializes in mammography and bone densitometry, conducts bone density screenings at Excelsa Square at Norwin.

**EXCELA HEALTH OFFERS IMAGING SERVICES
WITH ADDED FEATURES TO KEEP BONES HEALTHY**

GREENSBURG, PA, September 30, 2013 ... Bone is the basis of the human anatomy. When bones are weak people are at greater risk for fractures. Excelsa Health offers bone density testing at several sites, including Excelsa Square at Norwin, where new screening technology includes Fracture Risk Assessments (FRAX) and Vertebral Fracture Assessments (VFA) to help patients understand their risk of developing osteoporosis and indicative signs of vertebral fractures.

Bone density tests use a central dual energy x-ray absorption (DEXA) machine to scan the lower spine and one hip where the computer measures the amount of low-level radiation it takes to penetrate the bone. The computer then compares that amount against a national average of a person in the same age, height and weight groups as the patient. This returns a score, called a "T score" that places the patient into a low to high range in one of three categories: normal, osteopenia (a lower-than-normal bone mineral density) or osteoporosis.

"Bone density tests are usually prescribed for patients with a family history of bone mass loss or osteoporosis, patients on long-term steroid or seizure medications, patients who are going or who have gone through breast cancer treatment and patients with a broken bone after age 50," said Excelsa Health radiologist Anthony Daniele, MD. "It hopefully helps us catch bone mass

loss before it develops into osteoporosis and is an important test for asymptomatic patients' well-being.”

The typical bone density test requires no needles, enclosed spaces or invasive procedures. Patients fill out a questionnaire upon arrival and are asked to lie on a table. According to Karen Kane, an imaging technologist who specializes in mammography and bone densitometry at Excelsa Square at Norwin, the process usually takes about 15 minutes.

Anyone can develop osteoporosis, but bone mass loss generally occurs more in women. As Excelsa Square at Norwin continues to expand its imaging services for women, a new bone density machine was purchased in 2012 that can perform a Fracture Risk Assessment (FRAX) as part of the screening.

“The fracture risk assessment is inherent in the computer and calculates the patient’s risk of fracture in the next 10 years,” said Kane. “It gives the patient a percentage and a number to gauge individual risk.”

The FRAX occurs as long as the imaging technologist tells the computer to calculate it at the beginning of the test.

Another test available only at Excelsa Square is the VFA. This test transforms the machine into a virtual x-ray. The patient adjusts to a position with his or her legs lifted and the machine scans the lumbar spine between specific vertebrae. The scan includes a lateral view of the spine all on one image and helps identify vertebrae fractures. This test is only performed with a prescription from a doctor.

Excelsa Health offers regular bone density testing at Frick, Latrobe and Westmoreland Hospitals. To schedule an appointment at any of these locations, including Excelsa Square at Norwin, call Centralized Scheduling at 724-689-0100.