



## **Endocrine Society and Hormone Foundation Call for Increased Research into Bone Health and Osteoporosis**

**Chevy Chase, MD, October 20, 2004** - The Endocrine Society and its patient education affiliate, The Hormone Foundation, today called for more research into osteoporosis and low bone mass. The increase in research, note the two organizations, could lead to enhanced understanding of the causes of and treatments for these debilitating conditions. These announcements follow the release of a report from the U.S. Surgeon General, which warns that by 2020 one in two Americans over the age of 50 will be at risk for a fracture from osteoporosis or low bone mass. The report also found that:

- 300,000 people are hospitalized each year for hip fractures;
- Twenty percent of seniors who suffer from a hip fracture die within one year; and
- Approximately \$18 billion are spent each year on direct care costs for osteoporotic fractures. This number is expected to increase, according to the report, if preventative actions are not taken.

"We now have clear evidence that in the future more and more aging Americans will develop fractures as a result of low bone mass and osteoporosis. These fractures are going to severely impact a person's ability to live a normal life and will cost our nation significant amounts of money in healthcare costs. We can work to prevent these fractures by gaining a better understanding of the causes of low bone mass and by identifying new therapies to treat osteoporosis and bone loss," noted Endocrine Society President Anthony Means, Ph.D.

Dr. Means also noted that this research will be costly and indicated that both public and private research dollars will be needed to make progress in the future. "Endocrinologists will be conducting the research to help patients understand how they can prevent bone loss as they age. Bone is a major target of sex hormones. The decrease of estrogen after menopause, for example, causes post-menopausal bone loss, which leads to osteoporosis as women age. In addition, bone mineral density is lower in men who are hypogonadal - or have a low level of male sex hormones," explained Dr. Means.

Among its key points, the Surgeon General's report calls upon various stakeholders such as voluntary health organizations, government, industry, and professional associations such as The Endocrine Society and The Hormone Foundation, to take steps to promote

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bone health. The Hormone Foundation-the patient education affiliate of The Endocrine Society-has developed patient education materials on several areas of endocrinology, including osteoporosis. Most recently, the Foundation released a series of bilingual (English and Spanish) fact sheets titled "Hormones and You," one of which is on osteoporosis. This fact sheet and other useful information on osteoporosis are available on The Hormone Foundation's Web site at [www.hormone.org](http://www.hormone.org) "The best way to help patients avoid fractures as they age is to educate them about their bone health. The Hormone Foundation is dedicated to providing patients-both directly and through their doctors-with information that can help them learn about prevention and treatment options," explained Dr. Robert Jaffe, President of The Hormone Foundation. "In the future, we will also be looking for ways to partner with other organizations to expand our efforts on this important issue."

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*The Hormone Foundation, the public education affiliate of The Endocrine Society, is a leading source of hormone-related health information for the public, physicians, allied health professionals and the media. Our mission is to serve as a resource for the public by promoting the prevention, treatment and cure of hormone-related conditions through outreach and education. ([www.hormone.org](http://www.hormone.org))*

*Founded in 1916, The Endocrine Society is the world's oldest, largest, and most active organization devoted to research on hormones, and the clinical practice of endocrinology. Today, The Endocrine Society's membership consists of over 11,000 scientists, physicians, educators, nurses and students in more than 80 countries. Together, these members represent all basic, applied, and clinical interests in endocrinology. The Endocrine Society is based in Chevy Chase, Maryland. To learn more about the Society, and the field of endocrinology, visit our web site at [www.endo-society.org](http://www.endo-society.org)*