

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION/THESIS/RESEARCH PAPER/CREATIVE PROJECT: Factors Associated With Knowledge of and Preventive Behaviors for Osteoporosis in Adults in the United States

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In the United States, approximately 44 million adults over the age of 50 are affected by osteoporosis – 10 million already have the disease while the other 34 million have low bone mass (NOF, 2009). Though osteoporosis is preventable, it is unclear what determines whether or not a U.S. adult will not only possess the knowledge to implement preventive behaviors for osteoporosis, but also utilize it. The problem of the study was to examine the literature to determine what factors, if any, were associated with knowledge of and preventive behaviors for osteoporosis in adults in the United States. This literature review was conducted by searching databases using keywords to obtain applicable results; this search yielded 12 full-text articles published between 1995 and 2007 from six different databases. All of the articles (N=12, 100%) studied adults and almost all (n=11, 91.7%) had fewer than 500 participants. Most of the studies (n=8, 66.7%) used cross-sectional survey designs and all (N=12, 100%) were conducted on local populations. In general, these articles did not agree in their findings; while some claimed specific variables did impact knowledge, others claimed that those same variables did not impact

knowledge. The same held true for variables affecting osteoporosis preventive behaviors; while some studies show that specific variables do, indeed impact behavior, others refute this claim. Findings indicated that participation in an osteoporosis education program had a positive association with osteoporosis knowledge, knowing someone/having a family member with osteoporosis had a positive association with osteoporosis knowledge, Caucasians were more likely to have a higher knowledge of osteoporosis than other races or ethnic groups, and a high level of knowledge did not impact likelihood to engage in weight-bearing physical activity. The lack of similar variables in studies and thus an inability to draw concrete conclusions suggests that further research should examine those variables that were understudied or had inconsistent findings.