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[American Academy of Neurology](#)

Vertigo linked to osteoporosis

ST. PAUL, Minn. – People who have osteoporosis are more likely to also have vertigo, according to a study published in the March 24, 2009, print issue of *Neurology*®, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology.

The study involved 209 people with benign positional vertigo with no known cause such as head trauma or ear surgery. Vertigo is an inner ear disorder that is a common cause of dizziness. The disorder is believed to be caused by loose calcium carbonate crystals that move in the sensing tubes of the inner ear.

The people with vertigo were compared to 202 people with no history of dizziness. People with osteoporosis, or low bone density, were three times more likely to have vertigo, and people with osteopenia, which is the stage before osteoporosis, were twice as likely to have vertigo as people who had normal bone density.

In women, 25 percent of those with vertigo had osteoporosis, compared to nine percent of those who did not have vertigo, and 47 percent of those with vertigo had osteopenia, compared to 33 percent of those without vertigo. For men, 12 percent of those with vertigo had osteoporosis, compared to six percent of those without vertigo, and 40 percent of those with vertigo had osteopenia, compared to 27 percent of those without vertigo.

"These findings suggest a problem with calcium metabolism in people with vertigo," said study author Ji Soo Kim, MD, PhD, of Seoul National University College of Medicine in Korea. "Women most often have their first case of vertigo in their 50s, when they are also having a drop in bone mass due to loss of estrogen. Estrogen is one of the main hormones that influence calcium and bone metabolism."

Kim said researchers haven't determined the role of estrogen in vertigo. Kim noted that the link between osteoporosis and vertigo was also found in men, so other factors must also play a role.

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A recent guideline by the American Academy of Neurology found that vertigo can be treated easily and quickly through simple head and body movements. For more information, visit www.aan.com.

The study was supported by the Brain Korea 21 Project.

The American Academy of Neurology, an association of more than 21,000 neurologists and neuroscience professionals, is dedicated to promoting the highest quality patient-centered neurologic care. A neurologist is a doctor with specialized training in diagnosing, treating and managing disorders of the brain and nervous system such as Parkinson's disease, ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), dementia, West Nile virus, and ataxia.

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