

# Bones for life

## **Fighting osteoporosis without hormone replacement therapy – medical award winner calls for volunteers**

**Medical Research Week 2004**

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Kim Bennell, winner of the 2004 Amgen Medical Research Award, needs the help of the media in her fight against osteoporosis. She is available for interview today and throughout Medical Research Week.

One in two Australian women and one in three men over the age of 65 will suffer an osteoporotic fracture at some time during the remainder of their lives.

Kim Bennell says, “We need new approaches to treatment and prevention – especially as women turn from hormone replacement therapy. Exercise could be a key.” Kim is looking for volunteers for a one year targeted exercise program in improving bone density and falls risk factors in postmenopausal women with low bone density.

Associate Professor Kim Bennell is one of the pioneers of physiotherapy research and Foundation Director of the Centre for Health, Exercise and Sports Medicine at the University of Melbourne. She receives the 2004 Amgen Medical Research Award for her contribution to management of musculoskeletal conditions using non-pharmaceutical based therapies such as exercise.

Her research has already contributed to better care for people with arthritic knees – showing in a paper in the British Medical Journal that therapeutic taping of the knee improves pain and disability in patients with osteoarthritis of the knee.

“We believe that lifestyle intervention and exercise can improve the standard of living for sufferers of many musculoskeletal diseases. And exercise could substantially reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis.”

All participants in the osteoporosis trial will receive at no cost: bone density scan; medical screening; strength and balance assessment; dietary analysis; one year’s supply of calcium supplement.

To be eligible, participants must:

- Be female, aged 50 years or over and at least 5 years postmenopausal
- Have been diagnosed with low bone density by a bone density scan
- Not have had a fracture in the spine or hip
- Not be currently using hormone replacement therapy (HRT) or have used for more than 6 months in the last 3 years;
- Not be currently using any medication for low bone density or osteoporosis; not be currently participating in a regular exercise program; not be current smoker

Bones for Life is a research project conducted jointly by the University of Melbourne, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Barwon Health and sponsored by Swisse Vitamin Company, YMCA Victoria and Fernwood Geelong.

For more information including contact details for the trial visit [www.scienceinpublic.com/medical](http://www.scienceinpublic.com/medical)  
Media interviews – contact Niall on 03 5253 1391 or Bridget on (0407) 224 030.



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ASMR Medical Research Week is a national initiative of the Australian Society for Medical Research.

Medical Research Week highlights the contributions made by medical researchers to the health and well being of all Australians in the past, today and in the future. Supporters of Medical Research Week include the Australian Government’s Department of Health and Ageing, the National Health and Medical Research Council, Amgen, MSD, Pfizer and the Royal Australian College Of General Practitioners.