

IRAQ

OVERVIEW

The Iraqi Osteoporosis Society (IOS) was established in 2001 by a number of Iraqi doctors interested in the field of osteoporosis. The Society has several main aims:

- Upgrading the scientific level of its members by finding suitable opportunities for holding scientific and clinical meetings and encouragement of scientific research in the field of osteoporosis.
- Improving the level of training of medical and allied health professionals in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of osteoporosis by holding training courses and workshops inside Iraq, and through participation in meetings and courses outside Iraq.
- Publishing of scientific bulletins and establishing a web site.
- Cooperating with other Iraqi societies in different medical specializations and with Arabic, regional and international osteoporosis associations.
- Working together with health and teaching institutions in different fields; giving opinions and consultations about the resolution of health problems that are related to osteoporosis.
- Holding public lectures to increase awareness about prevention of osteoporosis and its complications among individuals.

IOS has been a member of PAOS since its establishment and has participated in all its activities. IOS has also held many scientific and clinical symposia and continued its activities in spite of the difficult situation in the country over that period. The last activity held by the society was a symposium on updates in the field of osteoporosis, held in Sulaimany in Sept 2010 with the participation of distinguished speakers and the attendance of more than 150 doctors interested in bone health.

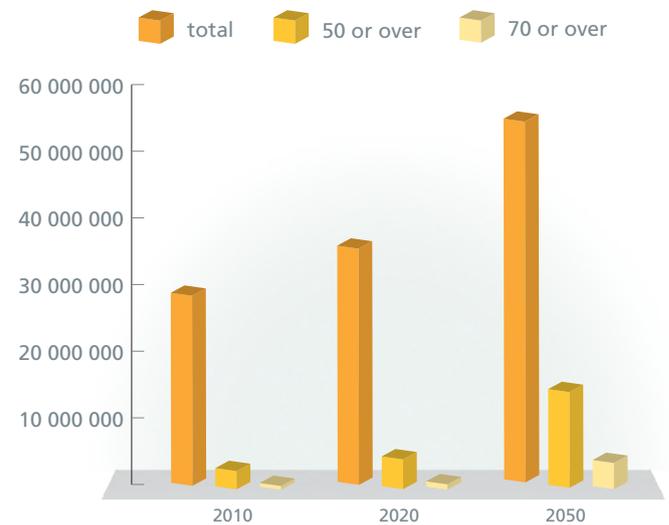
In cooperation with the Ministry of Health (MOH), IOS established Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Osteoporosis in Iraq, and guidelines for the prevention of osteoporosis at the level of primary prevention health care centres in Iraq. IOS works in cooperation with MOH to offer tools for the screening and diagnosis of osteoporosis (DXA & QUS) in wide areas of the country.

IOS is arranging a study to estimate the prevalence of osteoporosis in different diseases and its prevalence in the Iraqi population.

KEY FINDINGS

The present population in Iraq is estimated to be 29.6 million, of this 9.5% (2.8 million) is aged 50 or over and 1.9% (570 000) is 70 or over. By 2050, it is estimated that 26 % (15 million) of the population will be 50 or over and 7.2 % (4 million) will be 70 or over, while the total population will increase to around 56 million (fig 1).

FIGURE 1 Population projection for Iraq until 2050



REF US Census Bureau

EPIDEMIOLOGY

No available information.

Hip fracture

In Iraq, 75-80% of hip fractures are surgically treated. The average number of hospital bed days is 5-10 days and the loss of productivity to the workplace is 90 days.

Direct hospital costs are estimated to be USD 1000-3000 per hip fracture.

Indirect hospital costs are around USD 500-1500.

Vertebral fracture, other fragility fractures

There are no data on the number of fragility fractures or vertebral fractures in Iraq but it is estimated that only 20% of vertebral fractures and 40% of other fragility fractures are treated by a doctor.

DIAGNOSIS

There are 15 DXA machines, 3 ultrasound and 1 Quantitative CT in Iraq. All these machines are only available in urban centres. A DXA exam costs USD 60 and a US scan costs USD 25.

REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Both exams and osteoporosis treatments are reimbursed by government health plan. Drugs are only available with physician prescription.

CALCIUM AND VITAMIN D

Calcium supplements, Vitamin D supplements and fortified foods are available.

Programmes in lifestyle prevention of osteoporosis do exist.

PREVENTION, EDUCATION, LEVEL OF AWARENESS

Osteoporosis is recognized as a major health problem in Iraq and the government has approved guidelines and developed health professional training. The level of awareness among health care professionals is good, however it is low among allied health professionals. The national osteoporosis society holds scientific symposiums about the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of osteoporosis and contributes to activities held by PAOS and IOF.

Recent major achievements have been:

1. The availability of DXA scanners in a good number of governmental hospitals.
2. The establishment of guidelines for prevention of osteoporosis at the level of primary prevention centres.

3. The establishment of Iraqi guidelines for the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis by the Ministry of Health.
4. The improvement in educational programmes for prevention and treatment of osteoporosis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations are to increase the number of DXA machines and to establish more training courses in the field of osteoporosis.