

## For Clinics:

# How to identify and diagnose VCF's

### Patient Presents in Clinic

- Complain of sudden onset of back pain
- Patients at risk include those with osteoporosis, long term steroid use, known or occult malignancies



### Physical Exam

- Usually involve localized pain
- Start with light palpation of the spinous process and proceed to percussion as indicated
- Focused neurological examination, recommended to exclude acute neural injury to the spinal cord or nerve roots



### If VCF is Suspected...

- Recommend a lateral plain film x-ray
- MRI to confirm & r/o retropulsed fragment
- BoneScan with spect if cannot do MRI
- May consider CT



### If VCF is present...

- Localize pain & administer appropriate pain medication
- Contact Pain Care Boise



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Welcome Dr. Vaughn!

Dr. Vaughn completed his anesthesiology and interventional pain management fellowship at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. He is a member of the of the American Board of Anesthesiology as well as the American Society of Interventional Pain.



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**Risks of Conservative Treatment for VCF**

(Vertebral Compression Fractures)

## The "Who" of the Problem

- 50% of women and 25% of men will have an osteoporotic fracture in their lifetime<sup>1</sup>
- 10 million Americans have osteoporosis<sup>2</sup>
- Additional 34 million have osteopenia<sup>2</sup>
- 700,000 osteoporotic fractures occur annually in the U.S.<sup>3</sup>

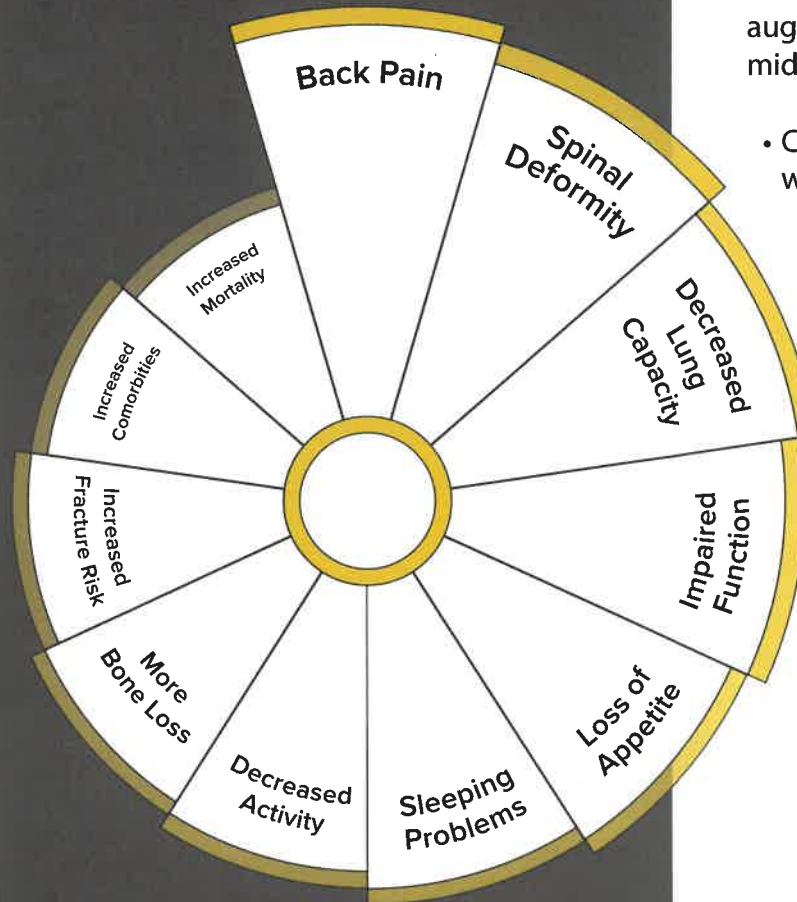


VCF (Vertebral Compression Fractures) when it goes untreated.

1. <https://www.nof.org/patients/what-is-osteoporosis/>(2017). May 11, 2015.
2. "10 Facts About Osteoporosis and Bone Health." Fact About Osteoporosis. ShareCare, 1 Jan. 2015. Web.
3. Siemionow K, Lieberman IH. Vertebral Augmentation in Osteoporotic and Osteolytic Fractures. Curr Opin. Support Palliat Care. 2009 Sep;3(3):219-25

## Risks of Conservative Therapy

- Bed rest
  - Leading to "the downward spiral"
- Bracing
- Open surgery – fixation equipment
- Pain tolerance



## What's new:

### Medicare No Longer Requires 6 Weeks of Conservative Therapy for VCFs

- Medicare Administrative Contractors (MAC) CGS, NGS, Noridian and WPS have changed the VCF LCD that will alter Medicare vertebroplasty and vertebral augmentation coverage beginning in mid to late 2020.
  - Coverage will no longer require 6 weeks of conservative therapy and will now cover acute fractures (< 12 weeks) with no conservative management required.
  - Ballon Kyphoplasty patients experience lower Mortality rate and overall morbidity than conservative management VCF patients.
- Studies conclude that for every 15 patients treated with VCF, one life is saved. (Edidin et al)

Reduce Mortality from VCF's by contacting  
Pain Care Boise at (208) 342-8200