



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

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ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

6300 North River Road  
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June 27, 2008

Mr. Calvin Teel, MS  
Public Health Advisor  
Office on Women's Health  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Parklawn Building, Room 16A-55  
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Mr. Teel:

On behalf of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) and the AAOS Women's Health Issues Advisory Board (WHIAB), I am writing to express our interest and commitment to the National Bone Health Campaign, per the June 6<sup>th</sup> Federal Register Notice.

Musculoskeletal disorders and disease are the leading cause of disability in the United States. The conditions with the highest burden of disease range from arthritis to low back pain to spinal deformity to osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is often considered a disease that affects mostly females, although it does affect males in smaller numbers. According to *The Burden of Musculoskeletal Diseases in the United States*, in 2002, an estimated 44 million persons over 50 years old were at risk for fracture due to osteoporosis or low bone mass. By 2020, if current trends continue and treatments are not found, it is estimated that over 61 million persons may be at risk.<sup>1</sup>

The AAOS and the WHIAB consequently have a commitment to promoting bone health to both our membership and to the public. We remain focused on promoting bone health to all age groups, decreasing the future risk of falls and fractures, and providing our fellowship with cutting edge information related to sex, gender, and bone health. In all of these efforts, the AAOS and WHIAB strive to create collaborative relationships with organizations sharing our goals and to inform the public and government partners about the high burden of disease and disability associated with osteoporosis.

The AAOS understands that bone health in young girls and women is very important. The AAOS has worked with the U.S. Bone and Joint Decade on *Protect Your Bones and Joints* (PB&J), an educational program aimed at teenagers to help improve their knowledge and prevention of musculoskeletal disorders. The AAOS also engages in outreach campaigns aimed at youth; for instance, *Prevent Injuries America!*, and the 2008 print public service ads called "Boney Ben" and "Muscle Molly."



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We look forward to working with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on this important endeavor. The liaison for women's health issues and HHS/NIH outreach is Christy M.P. Gilmour, Manager of Medical Research in the Office of Government Affairs. Ms. Gilmour can be reached at 847-384-4323 or via email at [gilmour@aaos.org](mailto:gilmour@aaos.org).

Thank you in advance for this collaborative opportunity.

Sincerely,

Mary I. O'Connor, MD  
Chair  
AAOS Women's Health Issues Advisory Board

CC: Christy M.P. Gilmour

- 1) *Burden of Musculoskeletal Diseases in the United States: Prevalence, Societal and Economic Cost.* Rosemont, IL, American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. February 2008.