Automated link to national intervention guidance helps doctors interpret FRAX results

Following UK example, Finnish and Lebanese FRAX calculators now include automated link to national assessment guidance

The fracture risk assessment tool FRAX, promoted and supported by the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF), has become an important aid in the clinical assessment of osteoporotic fracture risk in patients aged 40 to 90 years. However, while a FRAX calculation is quick and simple, interpretation of the results in order to make treatment decisions can be a challenge for physicians.

The UK FRAX calculator pioneered an automated link to its national NOGG guidance in 2008. Now, doctors in Finland and Lebanon will also benefit from an automated link to their respective national intervention guidance.

FRAX co-developer Dr. Eugene McCloskey, Professor in Adult Bone Disease and Honorary Consultant at the Metabolic Bone Centre, University of Sheffield UK, stated, “Treatment decisions should always be based on good clinical judgment, which includes an assessment of individual fracture risk. Successful use of FRAX in clinical practice is enhanced by the automated link to the respective national intervention and assessment guidance. We hope that more countries will work with us to integrate their FRAX calculators with the respective national assessment recommendations.”

The FRAX output gives a patient’s 10-year probability of a hip fracture and of a major osteoporotic fracture (hip, clinical vertebral, humerus or wrist fracture) based on specific clinical risk factors, with or without bone mineral density (BMD). When linked automatically to guidance pages, the output is then plotted on country-specific intervention threshold graphs. The colour coded graph can indicate a number of actions including whether to treat, undertake a bone mineral density testing or to simply give lifestyle advice and reassurance.

Dr Heikki Kröger, Professor, Department of Surgery/Orthopaedics Kuopio University Hospital stated, “We are very pleased that doctors in Finland will now have national guidance at their fingertips as this will aide in decision making in the course of a clinical assessment for fracture risk. Osteoporotic fractures cost our health care system more than €383 million annually - not counting the immense cost to the patients in terms of lost quality of life and long-term disability. It is therefore important that doctors identify and treat high-risk individuals before debilitating fractures occur.”

“FRAX Lebanon was launched on-line in September 2009 and has become an important tool for physicians in our country”, stated Dr. Ghada El-Hajj Fuleihan, Professor of Medicine, Director of the Calcium Metabolism and Osteoporosis Program & WHO Collaborating Center for Metabolic Bone Disorders, American University of Beirut, Lebanon. “This tool has had a great impact on addressing the heavy toll incurred by the steady increase in osteoporotic fractures in our country. It has allowed the development of FRAX based national osteoporosis guidelines that were unanimously endorsed by eight concerned national scientific societies, the Lebanese national task force for osteoporosis, and health authorities. Having our national FRAX linked to our
FRAX based guidelines will greatly enhance their application and substantially optimize patient care, targeting therapy to high risk individuals”, added Dr El-Hajj Fuleihan.

About FRAX®
FRAX is a simple calculation tool that integrates clinical information in a quantitative manner to predict a 10-year probability of major osteoporotic fracture for both women and men in different countries. Developed at the Centre for Metabolic Bone Diseases, University of Sheffield, UK, the tool assists primary health-care providers to better target people in need of intervention, improving the allocation of health-care resources towards patients most likely to benefit from treatment. FRAX is available as a free online calculator at www.shef.ac.uk/FRAX, as an iPhone App https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/frax/id847593214?ls=1&mt=8 and as Desktop application http://www.who-frax.org/

About IOF
The International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) is the world's largest nongovernmental organization dedicated to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis and related musculoskeletal diseases. IOF members, including committees of scientific researchers, leading companies, as well as more than 200 patient, medical and research societies, work together to make bone, joint and muscle health a worldwide health care priority. http://www.iofbonehealth.org / www.facebook.com/iofbonehealth / https://twitter.com/iofbonehealth

Media contact
Charanjit K. Jagait, PhD
Communications Director, International Osteoporosis Foundation
Tel.: +41 22 994 01 02 • Mob.: +41 79 874 52 08 • Email: cjagait@iofbonehealth.org