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VERTEBRAL FRACTURES OFTEN UNDIAGNOSED IN MEN

Montréal (25 June 2007)—Vertebral fractures that are classified as morphometric (causing height loss and deformity) found in men have been shown to negatively impact on quality of life. Despite increased reports of height loss, morphometric vertebral fractures (MVF) remain mostly undiagnosed. Julie Pasco, BSc (Hons), DipEd, PhD, reported these findings today at the 17th Scientific Meeting of the International Bone & Mineral Society (IBMS).

Dr. Pasco and her team are participating in the Geelong Osteoporosis Study (GOS), a study based in the Barwon Statistical Division in Southeastern Australia, which contains a mixture of rural and urban populations, a range of socioeconomic and multicultural groups, and a centralized health provider.

Using a random sample of 1,148 men aged 20-93 enrolled in the GOS, the team investigated the incidence of MVF and its impact on quality of life as compared to men without MVF.

Of the 1,148 men, 991 men were given an osteoporosis-targeted quality of life questionnaire, originally developed for women and modified for men. Using vertebral measurements from lateral scans of the spine, MVF was identified in 54 men, 59 percent of whom had self-reported height loss. Most (94%) of the men were unaware of their fracture. The questionnaire determined poor quality of life scores for 42 of the 54 men (78%) afflicted with MVF. Poor quality of life was determined for 433 of the 937 men with no vertebral fracture (46%).

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“Skeletal health in men is often overlooked,” says Dr. Pasco. “Yet, MVF is prevalent in 15 percent of men 80 and older,” she adds, “and those men are twice as likely to have poor quality of life as their healthy peers.”

For more information about Dr. Pasco’s study, please visit www.ibmsonline.org.

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The International Bone & Mineral Society (IBMS) is the first and the largest international network of researchers, clinicians, companies and societies dedicated to promoting the generation and dissemination of knowledge of basic biology and clinical science of the skeleton and mineral metabolism. To learn more about IBMS, visit www.ibmsonline.org.