What is the Catch a Break Project?
Alberta Health Services has launched Catch a Break to identify Albertans who have suffered a low-trauma fragility fracture caused by osteoporosis. The program helps connect these individuals to a treatment and education program designed to prevent any future fractures.

Catch a Break has a research component which involves evaluating its impact for the purpose of understanding effective practices and methods for detecting and treating osteoporosis.

How does the program work?
Catch a Break is operated through Health Link Alberta (AHS’ 24/7 telephone service providing health information and advice).

1. Health Link Alberta staff review information from emergency departments and cast clinics to identify patients who have had a low-trauma fracture which raising suspicion of osteoporosis.
2. These patients are contacted by Health Link Alberta staff who conduct an assessment by phone.
3. Patients whose phone assessment reinforces suspicion of osteoporosis are advised to see their family physician for further investigation and to assess their risk of future fragility fractures.
4. Patients are also mailed information about osteoporosis, including the risk factors and disease management strategies.
5. Each patient's family physician is sent an information package, which includes details about the program and a summary of Osteoporosis Canada’s clinical guidelines on investigation and treatment of osteoporosis.

Where is Catch a Break being offered?
Catch a Break was expanded across all of Alberta in December 2014 following a successful launch earlier in the year in the Edmonton and Calgary Zones.

Does Catch a Break support the medical home?
Catch a Break supports the medical home model. The project is designed to help patients become an active part of their own health care. It provides scheduled reminders to patients to follow-up with their family physician. This ensures patients continue to be connected to their PCN and family physician for the coordination of their care.
Who can I contact if I have medical questions regarding patients in the Catch a Break program?
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What should the family physician do with the information from Health Link Alberta? Should anyone be contacted?
Although patients are advised to contact their family physician about their suspected osteoporosis, some may delay or not take this important step toward prevention and treatment. We encourage PCN offices to contact patients upon receiving the information package to arrange follow up.

Why is early detection of osteoporosis important?
Without prevention and treatment, as many as 1 in 5 people diagnosed with fragility fracture will have another fracture within one year. The risk of a subsequent fragility fracture can be reduced by 40% to 60% through early treatment of osteoporosis.

The evidence indicates that most low-trauma fractures of the hip, wrist, spine, humerus, pelvis and ribs in people over the age of 50 are fragility fractures indicating osteoporosis. Canadian data show up to 80% of people who suffer a fragility fracture are not assessed or treated for osteoporosis. In other words, 8 in 10 lose the opportunity for early treatment of their disease. This can diminish significantly the opportunity to prevent a second, more devastating fracture, such as a hip fracture in an elderly person.

Here are some additional facts about osteoporosis you may find helpful in your practice:
• Up to half of hip fracture patients have had a previous fracture due to osteoporosis.
• People who have osteoporosis and suffer a fragility fracture are 20 times more likely to have another fracture compared to people with normal bone density and no history of fracture.
• After age 50, a low-trauma hip or vertebral compression fracture almost always indicates osteoporosis, regardless of bone density.
• People being treated for osteoporosis who experience another low-trauma fracture may need further assessment.
How has the program been received so far?
As of January 2015, Catch a Break has contacted 5288 patients. Of those who joined the Catch a Break project, 3459 were considered a high risk for osteoporosis and 907 were considered low risk. Just 17 per cent of those contacted chose not to join the program.

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<th>Reached High Risk</th>
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<th>Refused</th>
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*as of February 28, 2015

Who coordinates the Catch a Break project?
Catch a Break is led by the Bone and Joint Health Strategic Clinical Network, the unit of Alberta Health Services responsible for developing health care service delivery strategies. It is supported by Health Link Alberta and Alberta Bone and Joint Health Institute, a not-for-profit dedicated to improving bone and joint health care for Albertans.

Where can I get more information about Catch a Break?
More information is available at https://myhealth.alberta.ca/alberta/Pages/Catch-a-break.aspx or you can contact the Catch a Break project manager, Liz Evens, at levens@albertaboneandjoint.com.