Abstract

There is little published information on the epidemiology of fracture in Australia. We have therefore carried out a population-based retrospective study of fracture in an Australian population covering 1,073 subjects, 60 per cent of the eligible population over the age of 65 resident in Busselton in the southwest of Western Australia. They completed a questionnaire on the number of fractures, the skeletal site and the degree of trauma that caused the fracture. In this population, 39 per cent had sustained a total of 620 fractures, and 22 per cent of women and 6 per cent of men had sustained osteoporotic fractures. Hip and spine fractures accounted for only 9 per cent of osteoporotic fractures in females whereas wrist fractures accounted for 27 per cent, other upper limb fractures for 19 per cent and other lower limb fractures for 11 per cent. These results suggest that emphasis on spinal and hip fractures as the only manifestations of osteoporosis is inappropriate.