

DR. WIMALAWANSA HEADS OSTEOPOROSIS STUDY

Sunil J. Wimalawansa, MD, PhD, professor of medicine and chief, division of endocrinology, metabolism, and nutrition, has the distinction of being the first University Professor recruited to the Department

Dr. Wimalawansa's investigations suggest that a revolutionary alternative to hormone replacement therapy may help prevent osteoporosis in postmenopausal women. The treatment consists of daily application of nitroglycerin ointment on the



skin. His studies over the last 15 years have shown that nitroglycerine may keep the body from resorbing bone, and this in turn slows the bone-thinning process, which otherwise leads to osteoporosis, the cause of broken hips in 95 percent of older persons who incur these fractures. Nitroglycerin also dilates blood vessels, prevents blood clots, improves circulation and has few adverse effects.

The study, *Nitroglycerin as an Option: Value in Early Bone Loss (NOVEL)*, is being conducted entirely through the Regional Osteoporosis Center at RWJMS, which provides state-of-the-art bone-density testing

Sunil J. Wimalawansa, MD, PhD, is the first University Professor recruited to the RWJMS Department of Medicine. He is an internationally recognized researcher and clinician, whose primary work focuses on calcium metabolism in osteoporosis and other metabolic bone diseases, and basic cardiovascular research including gene therapy.

as an integral part of the clinical program.

"Our study is important, because many women cannot tolerate or afford costly hormone replacement therapy," Dr. Wimalawansa says. "If effective, this treatment will provide new hope to postmenopausal women, without the side effects of currently available therapy."