



Eastmed Doctors
188 St. Heliers Bay Road
St. Heliers
Auckland
Phone - 09 585 1088
www.eastmed.co.nz

PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET – ZOLEDRONATE (ACLASTA)

Zoledronate (also known as zoledronic acid or Aclasta) is the most potent medicine in the bisphosphonate class currently available. Bisphosphonates work by preventing resorption of bone by inhibiting the function of bone-dissolving cells called osteoclasts. Bisphosphonates are commonly used in the treatment of osteoporosis and Paget's disease, and are also used for preventing some forms of cancer from spreading in bone. Zoledronate is given by an intravenous infusion (into a vein in the arm via a "drip") over about 15-30 minutes and can be given each 12-24 months as needed for treatment of osteoporosis. Treatment of Paget's disease involves even less frequent infusions. Zoledronate increases the bone density in patients with osteoporosis, to about the same extent as other medicines such as alendronate (Fosamax), and is effective at reducing fracture rates, by 35-70%. It also reduces bone pain in Paget's disease. It is licensed in New Zealand for treatment of osteoporosis and Paget's disease. Other than flu-like symptoms after the first infusion, side effects from zoledronate treatment are uncommon, and are in general no different from placebo-treated patients in randomised trials. It should be remembered that major fractures can be very dangerous, so this should be balanced against the small risk of ill effects from treatments. Treatment is usually accompanied by some calcium tablets and /or vitamin D tablets given at the time of the infusion, to keep blood calcium levels normal.

Adverse effects are usually mild and transient. **Common side effects** are a flu-like symptoms consisting of fever, fatigue, chills, and bone, joint, and/or muscle pain, anaemia, headache, dizziness, transient low blood calcium, gastrointestinal symptoms, renal impairment, breathing difficulty and lethargy. Very rarely osteonecrosis of the jaw has been reported. Refer to consumer medicine information at the website www.medsafe.govt.nz for full details.