Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

ZOLEDRONIC ACID (for cancer patients)

zoh-leh-dron-ik ass-id

What does it do?

Zoledronic acid is used to treat bone pain caused by cancer, and reduce the amount of calcium in your body.

Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have kidney, parathyroid, or dental problems.
- *Zoledronic acid* can cause kidney problems. Your doctor will check how your kidneys are working before your infusion.
- *Zoledronic acid* may cause problems in your jaw bone. You should be offered a dental check-up before you start to make sure your teeth and gums are healthy. Clean your teeth and visit your dentist regularly. Before you have any dental work, tell your dentist you have had a *zoledronic acid* infusion.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How is it given?

Zoledronic acid is given as an infusion into a vein over 15 to 30 minutes.

Can you take other medicines?

Some medicines available without a prescription may react with *zoledronic acid* including:

- anti-inflammatories, such as diclofenac (e.g. Voltaren®), ibuprofen (e.g. Nurofen®), or aspirin (e.g. Disprin®, in doses used for pain relief). These can also be found in some cold and flu medicines (e.g. Nurofen Cold and Flu®).

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Eye pain, changes in vision	Tell your doctor immediately
Symptoms of low calcium in your blood, including: tingling or numbness, muscle spasms, short of breath Joint, muscle or bone aches and pains Stomach upset	Tell your doctor if troublesome
Flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, aches and pains)	This usually passes after a few days, take paracetamol if needed

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- Rarely, *zoledronic acid* can cause an unusual thigh bone fracture. If you have used *zoledronic acid* for a long time, your doctor may suggest a break from it to help prevent this. Discuss this with your health professional. Tell your doctor if you have any new thigh, hip, or groin pain.
- *Zoledronic acid* is also known as zoledronate.