

Zoledronic Acid in Bone Health

What is zoledronic acid?

Zoledronic acid (Reclast®) is a medicine used to prevent and treat osteoporosis. It works by increasing bone density, which reduces your chances of fractures (breaks) in the spine and non-spine (including the hip).

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this medicine?

Before taking zoledronic acid, tell your doctor if you:

- Have any allergies, including the reactions you had.
- Have known health problems, such as:
 - » kidney disease
 - » low calcium levels in the blood
 - » malabsorption syndrome, or
 - » an underactive parathyroid gland.
- Have had:
 - » thyroid surgery
 - » parathyroid surgery, or
 - » surgery to remove your small bowel (intestine).
- Are already using another medicine that has zoledronic acid in it (such as Zometa).
- Are taking other prescription medicines (especially other osteoporosis medicines) or non-prescription medicines (including vitamins, minerals, herbals, or supplements).
- Are pregnant or may be pregnant. **Do not** take zoledronic acid if you are pregnant.

- Are breastfeeding or planning to breastfeed. **Do not** breastfeed while you take this medicine. Your doctor will let you know when it is safe to breastfeed after your last dose.



What must I do while on this medicine?

While on zoledronic acid:

- Tell all of your healthcare providers that you are taking this medicine. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Get the blood work that your doctor orders. These tests check how well your body is responding to the medicine.

While on zoledronic acid (continued):

- Take calcium and vitamin D supplements and do weight-bearing exercises, like walking or physical therapy. Doing these while on zoledronic acid help the medicine work better.
- You will need to be sure you are not dehydrated before getting this medicine. Check with your doctor to see if you need to drink extra fluids before your treatment.

How do I take this medicine?

Zoledronic acid comes as a liquid that is infused into a vein (IV).

Your doctor will give you a prescription for the medicine. On the day of your treatment, a nurse will give you the infusion in Medical Daycare.

How often do I need to take this medicine?

If the medicine is used to **treat** osteoporosis, your doctor will prescribe zoledronic acid for you to receive once a year.

If the medicine is used to **prevent** osteoporosis, your doctor can prescribe zoledronic acid for you to receive once every 2 years.

What can I expect on the day of my infusion appointment?

On the morning of your infusion appointment:

- Pick up your medicine from your pharmacy.

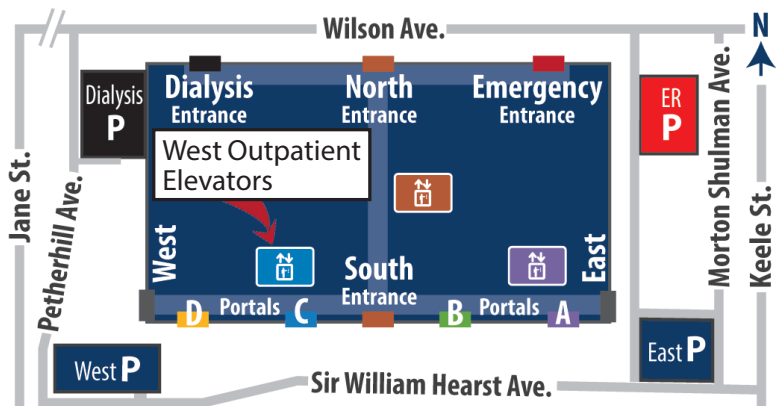


- Drink at least 2 glasses of water a few hours before you get the infusion to prevent dehydration.



When you arrive at the hospital:

- Take the West Outpatient Elevators to Level 2 and proceed to **Medical Daycare**.



During your infusion:

- The nurse will infuse the medicine slowly. You may be at the clinic for 1 to 1 ½ hours.

After your infusion:

- You may take acetaminophen (such as Tylenol®) to relieve any fever and chills you may have from the infusion.

What are some side effects of this medicine?

All medicines may cause side effects, but severe side effects are rare. The following is a list of signs and symptoms to watch out for.

Please let your nurse know if you are experiencing any of these symptoms during your infusion:

- Signs of an allergic reaction:
 - » Rash, hives, itchiness
 - » Red, swollen, blistered or peeling skin, with or without fever (temperature at or above 38°C or 100.4°F)
 - » Wheezing, trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking
 - » Tightness in the chest or throat
 - » Unusual hoarseness
 - » Swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of dehydration:
 - » Mood changes or confusion
 - » Muscle pain or weakness
 - » A heartbeat that does not feel normal or a fast heartbeat
 - » Very bad dizziness or passing out
 - » Feeling more thirsty
 - » Seizures
 - » Feeling very tired or weak
 - » Not feeling hungry
 - » Unable to pee or a change in the amount of pee
 - » Dry mouth, dry eyes
 - » Very bad upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of kidney problems:
 - » Unable to pee or change in the amount of pee
 - » Blood in the pee
 - » Unusual, sudden, or rapid weight gain.
- Very bad bone, joint, or muscle pain
- Swelling or pain in the jaw
- Any new or strange groin, hip, or thigh pain
- A burning, numbness, or tingly feeling that is not normal
- Chest pain
- Change in eyesight, eye pain, or very bad eye irritation
- Pain when swallowing
- Swelling of the arms or legs.

If you have any of these serious reactions after leaving the clinic, go to your nearest emergency department right away.



If you have any questions or concerns about your infusion appointment, please contact:

Medical Daycare

Humber River Hospital

Level 2 - 1235 Wilson Ave., Toronto, ON M3M 0B2

Tel: (416) 242-1000 ext. 21300