

# 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.

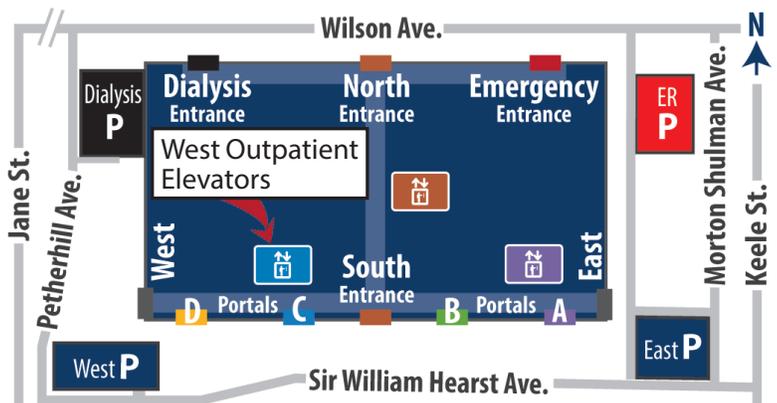


- Drink at least 2 glasses of water a few hours before you get the infusion to prevent dehydration.



### 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 Health

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