

## **Zoledronic acid 5mg** (page 1 of 2)



### **What is Zoledronic Acid?**

Zoledronic Acid is a bisphosphonate used to treat osteoporosis and Paget's disease of the bone. It helps to reduce the risk of fractures by strengthening your bones.

### **How and where is it given?**

You will receive an outpatient appointment to attend the Infusion Clinic within the Rheumatology department. The Zoledronic Acid is given intravenously (directly into a vein), typically over 15 – 30 minutes.

### **How long does it work for?**

Zoledronic Acid is designed to work for 12 months and is usually given annually for 3 years. After your third infusion your consultant will assess whether further treatment is required.

### **Possible risks and side effects.**

As with any drug, there is a chance of side effects; with Zoledronic Acid, however, these are usually mild and short-lived.

Common side effects (affects up to 1 in 10 users after the first infusion. They are less common following subsequent infusions)

- flu-like symptoms
- headaches
- chills/fever
- muscle, bone and joint pain
- gastrointestinal upset
- nausea
- tiredness

They can be treated with mild pain relief but if they persist for more than a few days, or worsen, you should consult your GP.

Atrial fibrillation (fast/irregular heartbeat). Although there has been a small increase reported, it is unclear whether this is related to the use of Zoledronic Acid, but if you experience a noticeable increase in your heartbeat, you should report this to your GP.

Uncommon side effects (affects up to 1 in 1000 users)

- uveitis (inflammation of the eye)

**Rheumatology helpline**  
**01722 429137**

If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: [customercare@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:customercare@salisbury.nhs.uk)

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: [www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily](http://www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily) or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: [patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk) if you would like a reference list.

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Additional rare side effects reported (frequency not known)

- anaphylactic shock (severe allergic reaction)
- osteonecrosis of the jaw (weakening of jaw bone, delayed healing of the gum usually associated with dental procedures)

If you experience these or any other suspected side effect, report them to your GP.

## **Before you start Zoledronic Acid.**

Any previously prescribed bisphosphonate e.g. Alendronic Acid or Risedronate should be stopped at least 2 weeks before starting Zoledronic Acid.

It is recommended that you visit your dentist and have any required treatment prior to your infusion. If any further treatment becomes necessary it is important to inform your dentist that you are on a bisphosphonate.

You will be required to have a blood test prior to your appointment; this is to check that your kidney function, calcium and vitamin D levels are satisfactory.

On the day of your infusion:

- eat normally
- take your prescribed medication as normal
- you must keep yourself well hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids before, during and after your treatment.

When not to have Zoledronic Acid.

- If you are pregnant, breast feeding or planning to become pregnant
- If you have an allergy to Zoledronic Acid or any part of the drug
- If you have low calcium/vitamin D levels
- If you have severe kidney problems
- If you have an infection or are unwell

## **Further contacts**

Rheumatology helpline on 01722 429137

National Osteoporosis Society helpline 0845 450 0230

<https://www.nos.org.uk/document.doc?id=1664>