

## Information for care staff

### Bisphosphonates

#### What are bisphosphonates?

These are a group of medicines which are used for bone related problems like osteoporosis.

#### How are bisphosphonates taken?



##### Always check the patient information leaflet for specific information

The medication should be taken on an empty stomach. Usually when first getting up in the morning before breakfast.



Check that the person has not eaten or drunk anything or taken any other oral medication already.



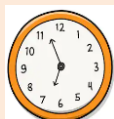
The person must stand or sit upright to take the medication.

Tablets or capsules must be swallowed whole with a full glass of plain drinking water (about 200mls).



They must **not** be sucked, chewed or crushed.

Check the patient information leaflet for how to give dispersible tablets and oral solution.



After taking the medication the person must stay standing or sitting upright and not eat or drink or take any other medication for a period of time. The patient information leaflet will tell you how long they should do this for.



#### What happens if the instructions are not followed?

If a bisphosphonate is taken with or close to food or some medications it may not be absorbed and will not work.

Bisphosphonates can cause damage to the food pipe (oesophagus) and mouth if they are not taken correctly.

**If the person cannot follow the instructions contact the prescriber promptly**

#### How often are bisphosphonates taken?

This depends on the bisphosphonate and the strength of the medicine.

Alendronic acid 70mg and risedronate sodium 35mg are taken once a week.

But alendronic acid 10mg and risedronate 5mg are taken daily.

Ibandronic acid 150mg is given once a month but lower strengths are given daily.

Sodium clodronate is usually given daily or sometimes twice daily.

**Always check the dispensing label and MAR chart carefully before giving any medication.**

#### Calcium and Vitamin D preparations

Many people who are taking bisphosphonates also take calcium and vitamin D medication such as Adcal D3 or Calcichew D3 Forte. These stop the bisphosphonate being absorbed if they are taken at the same time of day. A gap of at least 4 hours after the bisphosphonate is taken should be left. Talk to the GP or pharmacist.