

Tips for good dental health during cancer treatment

PATIENT

Novartis Oncology is committed to supporting you during your ZOMETA® (zoledronic acid) treatment. We want to remind you how important it is to monitor your dental health throughout the course of your treatment.

Zometa is used:

- To prevent bone complications, e.g. fractures, in adult patients where cancer has spread from the primary site to the bone.
- To reduce the amount of calcium in the blood in adult patients where it is too high due to the presence of a tumour.

Visiting your dentist

Cancer-related treatments, including Zometa, may affect your entire body, including your teeth and gums. During Zometa treatment (if possible, before you start treatment), it's important to visit your dentist and check up on your dental health. Osteonecrosis of the jaw (ONJ) has been reported in patients receiving Zometa.

Steps to consider before starting ZOMETA treatment¹

- Schedule a dental exam and cleaning
- Tell your dentist that you will be starting treatment with ZOMETA
- Discuss having dental procedures before ZOMETA treatment
- Ask your dentist to check and adjust removable dentures
- Tell your doctor if you have bleeding of the gums, a strange feeling in your teeth or gums, or a dental infection

Side effects that you should tell your doctor and dentist about²

- Swelling or sores in the mouth
- Pain or infection
- Taste changes
- Dry mouth
- Tooth decay
- Stiffness in the jaw

Regular dental hygiene is always important^{2,3}

Dental hygiene can be even more important for people who are taking Zometa, because some cancer-related treatments, including Zometa, can affect teeth and gums.

- Be sure to visit your dentist regularly
- Brush your teeth and tongue after every meal, using a soft toothbrush and a gentle stroke
- Floss gently once a day
 - If your gums bleed or hurt, avoid the area that is sore
- Keep your mouth moist by rinsing often with water
 - Many medicines cause dry mouth, which can lead to decay and other dental problems
- Avoid over-the-counter mouthwash, alcohol, and tobacco
- Eat a balanced diet
 - If your mouth is sore, try eating soft, moist foods

Keep your dentist informed. Good communication is important. Your dentist should know you are receiving ZOMETA treatment. The following form should be used to record information about your diagnosis and treatment and be shared with your dentist.

For further information please refer to the Zometa (zoledronic acid) package leaflet

Important information to give to your dentist

DENTIST

Contact and medical information

(to be completed by the oncologist):

Patient's name _____ Phone _____

Oncologist's name _____ Phone _____

E-mail address _____

Diagnosis (disease and stage) _____

Date of diagnosis _____

Past and planned treatments:

Surgery (site) _____

Radiation therapy (site) _____

Drugs:

Chemotherapy _____

Immunotherapy or other biological therapy (treatments) _____

Steroids _____

Bisphosphonates _____

Other cancer treatments _____

Important Safety Information

Suspected adverse reactions and medication errors associated with the use of Zometa should be reported to:
Medicines Authority Post-licensing Directorate, 203, Level 3, Rue D'Argens, Gzira GZR 1368, or at:
www.medicinesauthority.gov.mt/adrportal

Alternatively at: Novartis Pharma Services Inc. Representative Office Malta by phone on 21222872

References: 1. American Dental Association. Bisphosphonate medications and your oral health. http://www.ada.org/Sections/ScienceandResearch/PDFs/Patient_64.pdf. Accessed 8 March 2012. 2. For the dental patient: oral care for cancer patients. *J Am Dent Assoc.* 2002;133:1014. 3. American Cancer Society. Dry mouth or thick saliva. <http://www.cancer.org/Treatment/SurvivorshipDuringandAfterTreatment/NutritionforPeoplewithCancer/NutritionforthePersonwithCancer/nutrition-during-treatment-dry-mouth-thick-saliva>. Accessed 8 March 2012.



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Important information from your patient

DENTIST

The patient who has filled out this tear sheet is being treated for cancer. Osteonecrosis of the jaw (ONJ) has been reported in patients receiving Zometa. The majority of reported cases have been associated with dental procedures such as tooth extraction.

While receiving Zometa, this patient should avoid invasive dental procedures, if possible. Dental procedures have been found to exacerbate ONJ in patients who develop it while receiving therapy with a bone-targeted agent. If this patient must undergo an invasive procedure, please contact the patient's oncologist (contact information on reverse side of this sheet) to discuss ways to prevent or minimise his or her risk.