

**This reminder card contains important safety information that you need to be aware of before and during treatment with zoledronic acid (Zometa) injections for cancer-related conditions**

## **OSTEONECROSIS OF THE JAW (ONJ)**

Your doctor has recommended that you receive zoledronic acid (Zometa) injections to help prevent bone complications (e.g. fractures) caused by bone metastases and/or to reduce the amount of calcium in the blood in adult patients where it is too high due to presence of a tumour.

A side effect called osteonecrosis of the jaw (ONJ) (bone damage in the jaw) has been reported uncommonly in patients receiving zoledronic acid (Zometa) injections for cancer-related conditions. ONJ can also occur after stopping treatment.

In order to reduce the risk of developing osteonecrosis of the jaw, there are some precautions you should take:

### **Before starting treatment:**

- Ask your doctor to tell you about ONJ before you start treatment
- Check with your doctor whether a dental examination is recommended before you start treatment with zoledronic acid (Zometa)
- Tell your doctor/nurse (health care professional) if you have any problems with your mouth or teeth

Patients undergoing dental surgery (e.g. tooth extractions), who do not receive routine dental care or patients who have gum disease, are smokers, who get different types of cancer treatments or who were previously treated with a bisphosphonate (used to treat or prevent bone disorders) may have a higher risk of developing ONJ.

### **While being treated:**

- You should maintain good oral hygiene, make sure your dentures fit properly and receive routine dental check-ups
- If you are under dental treatment or will undergo dental surgery (e.g. tooth extractions), inform your doctor and tell your dentist that you are being treated with zoledronic acid (Zometa)
- Contact your doctor and dentist immediately if you experience any problems with your mouth or teeth such as loose teeth, pain or swelling, non-healing of sores or discharge, as these could be signs of osteonecrosis of the jaw

### **Read the package leaflet for further 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](http://www.medicinesauthority.gov.mt/adrportal)

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

MAH Address: Novartis Europharm Limited, Frimley Business Park, Camberley GU167SR, United Kingdom.

