PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Zoledronic Acid

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Reclast

Brand Names: Canada

Aclasta; JAMP-Zoledronic Acid; TARO-Zoledronic Acid; Zoledronic Acid - Z; Zometa

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat soft, brittle bones (osteoporosis).
- This drug is not approved for use in children. However, the doctor may decide the benefits of taking this drug outweigh the risks. If your child has been given this drug, ask the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions about giving this drug to your child.

Using this drug during cancer treatment:

- If your child has been given this form of this drug, talk with the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about giving this drug to your child.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Kidney disease, low calcium levels, malabsorption syndrome, or underactive parathyroid gland.
- If your child has had thyroid surgery, parathyroid surgery, or the small bowel removed.
- If your child is taking another drug that has the same drug in it.
- If your child is using another drug like this one. If you are not sure, ask your child's doctor or pharmacist.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Do not give this drug to your child during pregnancy.
- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while

taking this drug. Your child may also need to avoid breast-feeding a baby for some time after the last dose. Talk with your child's doctor to see if your child needs to avoid breast-feeding a baby after the last dose.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe to give this drug with all of your child's other drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your child's blood work and bone density checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- This drug works best when used with calcium/vitamin D and weight-bearing workouts like walking or PT (physical therapy).

- Give calcium and vitamin D as you were told by your child's doctor.
- Follow the diet and exercise plan that your doctor told you about.
- Have your child get a dental exam before starting this drug.
- Take care of your child's teeth. See a dentist often.
- You will need to be sure that your child is not dehydrated before getting this drug. Check with the doctor to see if you need to have your child drink extra fluids before getting this drug.
- Worsening of asthma has happened in people taking drugs like this one. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may cause fertility problems. This may affect being able to have children. Talk with the doctor.

If your child is or may be sexually active:

- A pregnancy test may need to be done to show that your child is NOT pregnant before starting this drug.
- If your child may become pregnant, your child may need to use birth control while taking this drug and for some time after the last dose. Talk with the doctor about birth control. If your child gets pregnant, call the doctor right away.

What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of fluid and electrolyte problems like mood changes, confusion, muscle pain or weakness, fast or abnormal heartbeat, severe dizziness or passing out, increased thirst, seizures, feeling very tired or weak, decreased appetite, unable to pass urine or change in the amount of urine produced, dry mouth, dry eyes, or severe upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.

- Shortness of breath.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Chest pain.
- Change in eyesight, eye pain, or severe eye irritation.
- Trouble swallowing.
- Very bad pain when swallowing.
- Swelling in the arms or legs.
- This drug may cause jawbone problems. The risk may be higher with longer use, cancer, dental problems, ill-fitting dentures, anemia, blood clotting problems, or infection. It may also be higher if your child has dental work, chemo, radiation, or takes other drugs that may cause jawbone problems. Many drugs can do this. Talk with your child's doctor if any of these apply to your child, or if you have questions. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has jaw swelling or pain.
- Some people have had unusual bone breaks. This includes a broken thigh bone. Tell the doctor right away if your child has any new or strange pain in the groin, hip, thigh, or other bone.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.
- Constipation, diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, or throwing up.
- Heartburn.
- Headache.
- Flu-like signs.
- Back, joint, muscle, neck, arm, or leg pain.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.
- Have your child drink at least 2 glasses of liquids a few hours before getting this drug.
- Have your child drink lots of noncaffeine liquids unless told to drink less liquid by your child's doctor.
- Acetaminophen may be given to lower fever and chills.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your child's doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do

so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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