



Consumers Can Help Prevent Harmful Medication Incidents

SafeMedicationUse.ca Newsletter

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Keeping Track of Your Medications to Prevent or Treat Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a condition that weakens bones which can lead to a greater chance of falling and breaking a bone. Many different medications, available as pills or injections, are used to prevent or treat osteoporosis. Depending on the specific medication, pills are taken daily, weekly, or monthly and injections are given daily, or every 1 to 12 months. It is important to take the medication correctly to strengthen your bones and to prevent harmful side effects.

SafeMedicationUse.ca received a report about a person who received their first dose of denosumab (also known as Prolia) in their doctor's office. Denosumab is an injectable medication that should be given every 6 months. After moving to a health care facility, the person incorrectly received the medication once a month for 3 months. As a result, this individual experienced severe joint pain, confusion, and multiple infections.

SafeMedicationUse.ca has the following tips to help you take or receive your medications to prevent or treat osteoporosis at the right time:

- Ask your pharmacist how often to use your osteoporosis medication. The best time to ask this question is when you pick up your medication for the first time. This information will also appear on the label of your medication container. Use the [5 Questions to Ask](#) to help you get more information about your medication.
- For osteoporosis medication in pill form:
 - pick a regular day to take the medication that is easy to remember (for non-daily medications),
 - ask about the best time of day to take the medication, and
 - ask if there are special instructions such as staying upright for a period of time after taking the dose to prevent side effects.
- For injections that are given every 1 to 12 months:
 - note the date of the next injection on a calendar, and
 - set reminders in your phone to pick up your prescription and book the injection appointment.
- Keep a list of your medications, including the date you last took or received any non-daily osteoporosis medication. Share the list with your care team, especially if you are admitted to a hospital or any care facility.



This newsletter was developed in collaboration with Best Medicines Coalition and Patients for Patient Safety Canada.

Recommendations are shared with healthcare providers, through the ISMP Canada Safety Bulletin, so that changes can be made together.

This newsletter shares information about safe medication practices, is noncommercial, and is therefore exempt from Canadian anti-spam legislation.

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