

# Osteoporosis Medicines: Bisphosphonates



Depending on your needs, your healthcare provider may prescribe medicines to prevent or treat osteoporosis.

## Bisphosphonates

Several medicines make up the class of bisphosphonates. They are the most common type of medicine used to help prevent and treat bone loss. Bisphosphonates are taken as a pill. Or they are injected through an IV (intravenous) infusion. They must be taken exactly as directed. They may help:

- Reduce bone loss
- Increase bone density in the hip and spine
- Reduce risk of fractures in the spine, hip, and wrist

Side effects may include:

- Heartburn
- Nausea
- Belly (abdominal) pain
- Bone or muscle pain

## Taking bisphosphonates pills



Always read medicine information closely. You should not take bisphosphonates if you currently have upper gastrointestinal disease. Certain bisphosphonates must be taken:

- On an empty stomach

- With a full glass of water (8 oz.) first thing in the morning
- At least 30 minutes to 1 hour before any food, drink, or other medicines
- While sitting or standing. You should not lie down for at least 30 minutes after taking the medicine.

Newer medicines can be taken weekly or monthly. Talk with your healthcare provider to find out which one is right for you.

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