



A Guide to your ZOLEDRONIC ACID Infusion for Osteoporosis

What is ZOLEDRONIC ACID (Aclasta)?

Zoledronic acid is a medicine for the treatment of osteoporosis and people who are at increased risk of bone fracture. It belongs to a group of medicines called bisphosphonates. The active substance is called zoledronic acid. Zoledronic acid also contains the following inactive ingredients: mannitol, sodium citrate and water.

How does ZOLEDRONIC ACID work?

Zoledronic acid works by attaching to bone, preventing it from breaking down too much and protecting it from further breakdown. The usual dose of Zoledronic acid is 5 mg given as an intravenous infusion (drip into a vein). It is administered by our nurse. Although the infusion takes 15 minutes or so, please plan to spend up to 1 hour with us to have the drip put in and your blood pressure checked.

What should I do before I get my ZOLEDRONIC ACID?

It is important to drink plenty of fluids (at least one or two glasses) before your infusion of Zoledronic acid. Taking paracetamol 500mg x 2 tablets before you come in for the infusion and twice daily after the infusion will help reduce the risk of side effects. You may eat normally on the day you are treated.

Will ZOLEDRONIC ACID affect my ability to drive?

Adverse reactions, such as dizziness, may affect the ability to drive or use machines, though no studies on this effect with Zoledronic acid have been performed.

What can I expect after my infusion of ZOLEDRONIC ACID?

As with all medicines, some people may have side effects when they receive Zoledronic acid.

People taking Zoledronic acid can experience:

- Flu-like symptoms, such as fever and chills
- Pain in the muscles, bones or joints
- Headache



Most of these side effects occur within the first three days following the infusion of Zoledronic acid. They are usually mild or moderate and tend to go away within three days of onset.

We recommend you take paracetamol to manage these side effects. The chance of experiencing these side effects decreases with subsequent doses of Zoledronic acid. If the symptoms do not go away or get worse, you should speak to your doctor.

This is not a complete list of side effects. If any of the side effects become serious, or if you notice any side effects not listed in the medicines information leaflet, please tell your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

The Importance of a healthy lifestyle.

A healthy lifestyle plays an important part in maintaining strong bones. There are things that you can do to help in keeping your bones as strong as possible:

- A healthy diet is very important in maintaining strong bones.
- Calcium and vitamin D supplementation are recommended in conjunction with Zoledronic acid.
- Physical activity, especially weight bearing exercise such as walking, are important in keeping the bone and surrounding muscles strong and healthy.
- Smoking and alcohol intake can impact bones. Stopping smoking and moderating alcohol intake can have a beneficial effect on bone health.

What happens during your appointment?

Infusion therapy involves the administration of the medication through a needle or cannula. The cannula is usually inserted into a vein in your arm and is then connected to a sterile bag that contains the fluid and the medication to be infused. During your infusion our staff will monitor you.



What to bring and what should I wear?

It is recommended that you wear comfortable loose-fitting clothes. Your sleeve will need to be pushed above the elbow. This will allow our staff to more easily insert the cannula and to monitor your vital signs. As some IV fluids may make you feel cool, it is also suggested that you bring a jacket to keep you warm.

Who supplies the infusion itself?

Your GP or specialist should supply you with the prescription for the Zoledronic Acid prior to the day of infusion. You should take the prescription to the chemist and bring the medication with you. The chemist may need to order the medication, so please go a few days ahead of time.

Can I bring a friend with me?

You are welcome to bring a support person with you. They can remain with you in our treatment room.

Can I get a medical / attendance certificate?

Yes - please let the doctor know if this required.

How much does an infusion cost?

Your zoledronic acid infusion at Royal Park Medical will attract an out-of-pocket cost of between \$225-\$265 depending on the Medicare rebate that is applicable (time based). This includes all consumables, nursing time and medical management.

The cost of the Zoledronic Acid (prescribed) is not included in the above fees. It is available on the PBS for some people with osteoporosis. If it is prescribed outside the PBS, it costs \$80-100.

Please discuss the cost of the infusion with your doctor prior to the consultation.

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