



Patient Power

What Tests Are Recommended for Myeloma Patients on Bisphosphonates?

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Margo:

Hello. My name is Margo, and I'm Donna's helper and caregiver. My question is regarding the bisphosphonates, and I was wondering if there is a way to monitor the bisphosphonates that's given to help detect if there's any complication in the jawbone or the mandible before it's actually symptomatic. For example, is there a like a bone density test that can be done just to prevent those complications? Thank you.

Jack Aiello:

That's a really good question. Dr. Nooka, do you want to try that?

Dr. Nooka:

Sure. So I strongly recommend the bone densities not for the purpose of proactively looking for some ONJ, but if you look at the common scenario or the common patient that gets diagnosed with osteoporosis, all the patient population are usually females. So if you have somebody fitting the criteria, not necessarily from a myeloma perspective there is enough reason for me to continue the bisphosphonates based on the bone density for other reasons. So that is one of the reasons why we incorporate the bone density on a yearly or bi-yearly, biennial staging, to look for other reasons of bone density. Coming to the other question of can we proactively to see if we can—if there's an amazing modality that can help us to detect ONJ. There is nothing that we do proactively at this point in time, but the patients who get ONJ are the ones who typically undergo a dental procedure while they're receiving the bisphosphonates. We typically ask them to hold off for a certain period of time before they go in for any of the dental procedures.

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