

How to give Bisphosphonates

E.g. Alendronic acid 70mg tablets, Risedronate 35mg tablets.

What are Bisphosphonates?

They are a group of medicines that bind to bone to strengthen and help prevent fractures. The most commonly prescribed bisphosphonate is alendronic acid 70mg tablets. **These medications are usually given once weekly.**

How should they be taken?

	They are usually taken immediately on getting out of bed in a morning.
	On an empty stomach – patient must not have had any tea, coffee, juice, breakfast or other swallowed medication. <i>*if the person has had any of the above, then the dose should be deferred until the following morning.</i>
	Must be stood or sat upright. Being propped up on pillows is insufficient; must be sat up as if in an upright chair.
	The tablet must be swallowed whole with a full glass (around 200ml) of plain drinking water.
	Tablets should not be sucked, chewed or broken.
	Sit or stand upright for 30 minutes after taking the tablet (60 mins for Ibandronic acid – Brand name Boniva)
	No food, drink (other than water) or other swallowed medication for at least 30 minutes after taking the tablet (60 mins for Ibandronic acid – Brand name Boniva).

Why is this important?

If bisphosphonates are not taken according to the administration instructions (contained within the patient information leaflet) there is a high risk of side effects occurring and/or the medication not working.

Calcium and vitamin D tablets (such as Adcal D3, Calcichew D3) are often prescribed alongside bisphosphonates to help them work more effectively. They can affect the absorption of bisphosphonates and as such they should be taken at least 4 hours after the bisphosphonate is taken. This may require the calcium and vitamin D tablet dose to be moved to lunchtime.

If the person cannot follow the administration instructions, contact the GP.