

Dr. Jason Cataldo, D.D.S., M.S.D.

Diplomate of the American Board of Periodontology

Periodontics & Dental Implants

3505 University Drive Durham, North Carolina 27707

Phone: (919) 493-9900 Fax: (919) 493-9901

www.CarolinaPerioImplants.com

Osteonecrosis of the Jaw

Bisphosphonates are medicines included in a class of drugs that may cause a patient to be at risk for developing osteonecrosis of the jaw. Certain dental treatments may increase that risk. You should understand that the risk for developing this condition is very small.

What is osteonecrosis of the jaw?

Bone is a living tissue with living cells and a blood supply. Osteonecrosis means death of bone. Death of the jaw bone can occur from a loss of blood supply or a problem with the bone's ability to re-grow. Very rarely, osteonecrosis of the jaw bone has occurred in individuals taking oral bisphosphonates for treatment of osteoporosis or Paget's disease of bone. Certain dental or periodontal treatments that involve the bone can make the condition worse.

What is the risk for developing osteonecrosis of the jaw?

Your risk for developing osteonecrosis of the jaw, from using oral bisphosphonates, is very small (estimated at less than one person per 100,000 person-years of exposure to the drugs Fosamax, Actonel or Boniva); but, if it does occur, it may be a serious condition with no known treatment. Please be aware of this complication. At this time, there is no way to determine who will develop the disease. The condition is rare and has just recently been associated with the use of oral bisphosphonates. It is important for you to understand that other factors may play a role in the development of osteonecrosis, such as other medications you are taking and health problems that you may have.

Should I stop taking the oral bisphosphonates?

The benefits of reducing hip fractures and other complications associated with osteoporosis are very important. Dr. Cataldo recommends you contact your physician if you have any questions about changing these medications. The risk for osteonecrosis of the jaw may still be present even if you stop the medication. Research is being conducted to determine the exact nature of the long-term effects.

What are the risks associated with periodontal procedures?

Although the risk is low with any procedure, it is higher with procedures involving the bone and associated tissues, such as tooth extraction, and periodontal surgery. Dr. Cataldo will be able to tell you if the procedure will involve these tissues.

How can I decrease my risk of developing osteonecrosis of the jaw?

Talk to your hygienist and Dr. Cataldo about oral hygiene, because maintaining good oral hygiene is the best way to prevent oral diseases that may require oral or periodontal surgery.

What are the signs and symptoms of osteonecrosis of the jaw?

You should contact Dr. Cataldo or your dentist immediately if you have any of the following symptoms, now or in the months following treatment:

- feeling of numbness, heaviness or other sensations in your jaw
- pain in your jaw
- swelling of your jaw
- loose teeth
- drainage
- exposed bone

What other choices do I have if I do not have the procedure?

Your treatment options depend on the oral health condition that you have. Dr. Cataldo will be able to discuss treatment options with you.

Risks associated with not having the procedure.

Remember, your risk for developing osteonecrosis of the jaw is very small. You may be at increased risk for developing other health problems if a dental disease is not treated. Dr. Cataldo will be able to discuss alternative treatments, other risks associated with various treatment options, and the risk of no treatment, even temporarily. You should also consult with your treating physician about any health risks.

Patient's signature

Dr. Jason Cataldo, D.D.S., M.S.D.