



Osteoporosis Canada

Ostéoporose Canada

COPING

May 20, 2015

Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!

Understanding Side Effects of Medication

In this issue

- Fracture Fact
- Understanding Side Effects of Medication
- Funny Bone
- A Recipe from our sponsor

Fracture Fact:
The total number of fragility fractures occurring in Canada is in the order of 200,000 cases per year among men and women.

All medications, including over the counter products and herbal remedies, have potential side effects. Drug manufacturers are required to report side effects seen in clinical trials even if the incidence is extremely low. Some of the reported side effects may have been experienced by fewer than 1% of participants in the trial. Other side effects are very rare and may not show up in clinical trials, so Health Canada gathers information on safety trends for health products and prescription drugs after they have been released to the Canadian market. This ensures that any new findings that arise when health products and drugs are being used widely can be collected. From there, the appropriate groups are notified and changes are made in how these products and drugs are used and monitored.

Possible Side Effects of Osteoporosis Medications

Bisphosphonates are the most common family of drugs used to treat osteoporosis. Four bisphosphonates are currently used for the management of osteoporosis in Canada: alendronate (Fosamax®, Fosavance® and generics), risedronate (Actonel®, Actonel DR™ and generics), zoledronic acid (Aclasta® and generics), and etidronate (Didrocal® and generics). The vast majority of individuals who take these medications do not experience any side effects. **Among the small number of individuals who do experience a side effect from the oral bisphosphonates (primarily alendronate and risedronate), the most common is heart burn.** Even less common side effects include nausea, abdominal pain, loose bowel movements, ulcers in the esophagus, and bone, joint and/or muscle pain. The most common side effects of the intravenous bisphosphonate zoledronic acid are low grade fever, headaches, and pain and stiffness in the muscles, bones or joints.

More worrisome to patients and their physicians is the fact that bisphosphonates have been linked to two rare conditions: osteonecrosis of the jaw, a breakdown of the jaw bone following dental surgery, and unusual (atypical) fractures of the femur (thigh bone). These rare conditions may also occur with denosumab (Prolia®) a newer class of osteoporosis treatment. Other possible side effects of denosumab include body aches, bladder infection and a skin infection called cellulitis.

Benefits Most Often Outweigh the Risks

If you have osteoporosis and are at high risk for fracture, the risk that you will break a bone from osteoporosis if you are not treated is much higher than your risk of ever getting either osteonecrosis of the jaw or an unusual thigh fracture if you are on these medications. The bottom line is, if you are at high risk of fracture, the benefits of osteoporosis medication far outweigh the risks. However, there is always a possibility that you will experience a side effect from your osteoporosis medication.

What to do if You Experience a Side Effect

What should you do if you think that you are experiencing a side effect from your medication? DO NOT decide on your own to stop taking it. ALWAYS consult your healthcare provider about any side effects or adverse reactions (another way of saying “side effects”) you may be having. If the side effect is minor, such as mild heartburn, you may choose to remain on the medication. For more significant side effects your health care provider may change the medication or ask you to stop taking the medication for a few days and then start it again to see if it is really the drug that is causing these symptoms.

Reporting Adverse Reactions

The Health Canada website — www.healthcanada.gc.ca/medeffect — is a valuable source of adverse reaction information. Med Effect Canada provides patients and health professionals with easy access to:

- Instructions for reporting an adverse reaction or side effect
- Safety information on drugs and other health products
- Information on the importance of reporting side effects

You can download a copy of the reporting form or sign up to receive free of charge, via e-mail, the *Canadian Adverse Reaction Newsletter* and health product advisories. All medications and health products that come to market have benefits and risks. Although health products are carefully tested before they are licensed in Canada, some adverse reactions may show up only after a product is in use by the general population. When you submit a suspected adverse reaction report, you contribute to making drugs safer for all Canadians.

You can report any adverse reactions you may be having to Health Canada. Both patients and health professionals can report adverse reactions to health products, including prescription and non-prescription medications, biologics (any medicinal product manufactured from biological sources including vaccines, blood or blood components, and the living cells used in cell therapy) and natural health products such as vitamins, minerals and herbal remedies to the **Canada Vigilance Program**. The **Marketed Health Products Directorate** (MHPD) coordinates post-market surveillance and assessment of safety trends concerning all marketed health products. The information is gathered through the Canadian Vigilance Program, which is responsible for the collection and assessment of adverse reactions that have been submitted by healthcare professionals and patients.

How do you report an adverse drug reaction? Toll-free phone and fax lines are available to report an adverse reaction, to request a copy of the adverse reaction reporting form, or to obtain information. Tel: 1-866-234-2345 and Fax: 1-866-678-6789.

Below is a list of the regional offices.

British Columbia and Yukon

Canada Vigilance Regional Office - British Columbia and Yukon

Health Canada, 400 - 4595 Canada Way, Burnaby, British Columbia V5G 1J9

E-mail: CanadaVigilance_BC@hc-sc.gc.ca

Alberta and Northwest Territories

Canada Vigilance Regional Office - Alberta and Northwest Territories

Health Canada, Suite 730, 9700 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4C3

E-mail: CanadaVigilance_AB@hc-sc.gc.ca

Saskatchewan

Canada Vigilance Regional Office - Saskatchewan

Health Canada, 4th floor, Room 412, 101 - 22nd Street East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 0E1

E-mail: CanadaVigilance_SK@hc-sc.gc.ca

Manitoba

Canada Vigilance Regional Office - Manitoba

Health Canada, 510 Lagimodière Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2J 3Y1

E-mail: CanadaVigilance_MB@hc-sc.gc.ca

Ontario and Nunavut

Canada Vigilance Regional Office - Ontario and Nunavut

Health Canada, 2301 Midland Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M1P 4R7

E-mail: CanadaVigilance_ON@hc-sc.gc.ca

Québec

Canada Vigilance Regional Office - Québec

Health Canada, Suite 202-40, 2nd Floor, East Tower

200 René-Lévesque Boulevard West, Montréal, Québec H2Z 1X4

E-mail: CanadaVigilance_QC@hc-sc.gc.ca

New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and, Newfoundland and Labrador

Canada Vigilance Regional Office - Atlantic

Health Canada, Suite 1625, 16th floor, 1505 Barrington Street, Maritime Centre

Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3Y6

E-mail: CanadaVigilance_ATL@hc-sc.gc.ca

If you are outside the country

Canada Vigilance National Office

Marketed Health Products Safety and Effectiveness Information Division

Marketed Health Products Directorate, Health Products and Food Branch

Health Canada, Address Locator 0701E, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9 Canada

Email: CanadaVigilance@hc-sc.gc.ca.

If you have questions about this article or any other aspect of osteoporosis, please call toll-free 1-800-463-6842 (416-696-2663 in the Greater Toronto Area) to speak to an information counsellor.

FUNNY BONE:

If at first you don't succeed, look in the trash for the instructions.

Moved? Changed phone number or e-mail address?

Let us know by calling 1-800-463-6842 or emailing copn@osteoporosis.ca and we'll update your information. This will ensure we keep you up to date!

A Recipe from our Sponsor

Mussels with Cheddar & Ale

Course: *Main Dishes*

Preparation Time: *15 mins*

Cooking Time: *15 mins*

Yields: *4 servings*

2/3 milk product serving(s) per person

Calcium: 28% DV/ 308 mg

These are hearty, comforting flavours that meld into a sauce with pleasantly surprising complexity, given its few ingredients. Serve with the same beer you use in the recipe for a perfect pairing experience.



Ingredients

1 tbsp (15 mL) **butter**
2 French shallots, chopped
1 bottle (341 mL) amber ale
2 lbs (1 Kg) mussels, scrubbed clean
1 1/4 cups (310 mL) **Canadian Aged Cheddar**, shredded
1 tbsp (15 mL) cornstarch
3 tbsp (45 mL) fresh parsley, chopped
Freshly ground pepper

Tips

Cheese alternatives: Canadian Swiss cheese, Provolone, Gouda.

For more information about this recipe:

<http://www.dairygoodness.ca/getenough/recipes/mussels-with-cheddar-ale>

Preparation

In a large saucepan, melt butter at medium-high heat and sauté shallots. Deglaze with beer and reduce by half. Add mussels, cover and let cook until mussels are all open (discard any that don't open).

Remove mussels from saucepan and reserve in a serving dish.

Add shredded cheese and cornstarch to saucepan while stirring. When thickened, add fresh parsley and pepper. Pour sauce over mussels and serve immediately.

This issue of COPING is sponsored by Dairy Farmers of Canada

NOTICE: Every issue of COPING is vetted by members of Osteoporosis Canada's Scientific Advisory Council to ensure accuracy and timeliness of content. These newsletters are not intended to promote or endorse any particular product. Product references, if they appear, are for illustration only.

These newsletters are not intended to replace individualized medical advice. Readers are advised to discuss their specific circumstances with their healthcare provider.



NUTRITION
DAIRY FARMERS OF CANADA



getenough.ca