



Osteoporosis Canada

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COPING

'A newsletter from COPN'

September 2, 2011

Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!

Reporting Adverse Drug Reactions

Did you know that you can report any adverse reactions (side effects) you may be having to drugs to Health Canada? The Marketed Health Products Directorate (MHPD) 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. The information for medication is gathered through the Canadian Adverse Drug Reaction Monitoring Program (CADRMP), which is responsible for the collection and assessment of adverse reactions that have been submitted by health care professionals and consumers (patients).

One of the most serious adverse reactions is an allergy. Anyone can develop an allergy to anything at any time, even to something they have been taking or using for a long time. An allergy can cause a rash, itchiness, hives, or swelling of the face, lips or throat. If the swelling is very severe it may make it difficult for you to breathe or swallow. The most severe type of allergy is called an anaphylactic reaction and this is a life threatening but extremely rare type of reaction. If you think a drug is causing you to have any of these allergic symptoms, you must stop taking it right away and visit your health care provider to report it to him or her and to receive alternative treatment for your condition. You should also report any allergy to your pharmacist so that no similar drug (which could cause an even more serious allergic reaction) will be accidentally prescribed to you in future,

There are many other types of adverse reactions to medications that are not allergic in nature and these can usually be divided into minor and major adverse reactions. The minor adverse reactions are more of a nuisance than a problem and they may include symptoms such as mild flushing, mild bloating of the abdomen, mild swelling of the ankles, mild heartburn that goes away with an antacid etc. Such reactions are usually easily tolerated or treated and the drug that is causing them does not usually have to be discontinued because its benefits still outweigh the inconvenience of a minor adverse reaction. When one of these reactions occurs, it is sometimes said that you are "intolerant" to the medication.

On the other hand, major adverse reactions are more severe and pose a significantly greater problem. Major adverse reactions to some osteoporosis medications may include things like heartburn which is not uncommon in patients taking bisphosphonates such as alendronate and risedronate. When mild, it does not necessarily mean that the medication must be stopped but if severe, the drug is usually discontinued. Other adverse reactions such as ONJ (osteonecrosis of the jaw) and atypical femoral fractures are very rare but potentially serious. As the major adverse reactions may pose a health risk, if you think that a drug you are taking (whether it is an osteoporosis drug or other drug) is causing any major side effects, you need to visit your health care provider to address such concerns. Your health care provider may change the medication or may ask you to stop taking the drug for a few days and then start it again to see if it is really the drug that is causing these symptoms. Once both you and your health care provider are certain that a particular drug is causing you to have a major adverse reaction, then you can report it. Don't forget to report these types of adverse reactions to your pharmacist as well.

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 about the program. Tel: 1-866-234-2345, Fax: 1-866-678-6789. Reports can also be mailed to your regional Adverse Reaction monitoring office at the address listed below:

Canadian Adverse Reaction Monitoring - BC 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

Canadian Adverse Reaction Monitoring - Alberta and NWT

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

Canadian Adverse Reaction Monitoring – 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

Canadian Adverse Reaction Monitoring – Manitoba

Canada Vigilance Regional Office - Manitoba
Health Canada

510 Lagimodière Blvd.
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2J 3Y1
E-mail: CanadaVigilance_MB@hc-sc.gc.ca

Canadian Adverse Reaction Monitoring - 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

Canadian Adverse Reaction Monitoring – 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

Canadian Adverse Reaction Monitoring – Atlantic

Canada Vigilance Regional Office - Atlantic
Health Canada
1505 Barrington St., Maritime Centre
Suite 1625, 16th floor
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3Y6
E-mail: CanadaVigilance_ATL@hc-sc.gc.ca

The Health Canada web site – www.healthcanada.gc.ca/medeffect - is a valuable source of adverse reaction information. 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.

Marg MacDonell Receives the 2011 Lieutenant Governor's Make a Difference Award

July 2011

Osteoporosis Canada would like to congratulate Marg MacDonell, an inspiring and dedicated volunteer at Osteoporosis Canada, Manitoba Chapter, for being awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Make A Difference Award. Recipients of this award have made contributions to their community through leadership, personal initiative and determination.

A victim of the disease herself, Marg has led the fight against osteoporosis in a number of venues. She has held positions such as co-chair of national advocacy; she has been the

driving force behind the Canadian Osteoporosis Patient Network; she has held the Manitoba Fund Development Chair, has led the creation of the “cheese and wine” event and has helped secure funds for a major advocacy campaign and contracted rural education coordinators.

Marg typifies the spirit of selfless volunteerism through her seemingly tireless effort, brilliant leadership and self-sacrifice. Her contributions have done so much to raise the awareness of both the disease of osteoporosis and the organization that works to mitigate its far reaching effects in the hearts, minds and bones of Canadians.

Funny Bone – How long a minute is depends on which side of the bathroom door you’re on.

Notices/references

i. Remember: It is important for you to eat a calcium rich diet (take calcium supplements only if necessary and after consulting with your doctor), get some appropriate exercise, take your vitamin D and if your doctor has prescribed a medication don’t forget to take it as directed.

ii. COPING Weekly will come to you every second Friday. We hope you enjoy it and find the information useful. Remember to log on to www.osteoporosis.ca for up-to-date information or call us toll-free at 1-800-463-6842 to speak with an information counsellor about your questions and concerns.

iii. The material contained in this newsletter is provided for general information only. It should not be relied on to suggest a course of treatment for a particular individual or as a substitute for consultation with qualified health professionals who are familiar with your individual medical needs. Should you have any healthcare-related questions or concerns, you should contact your physician. You should never disregard medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this or any newsletter.

iv. To have your name removed from the COPN mailing list please contact us at the email below.

You must provide the first and last name for which you registered in order to be removed from this list.

[<cPatientNetwork@osteoporosis.ca>](mailto:cPatientNetwork@osteoporosis.ca)

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