

From the desk of John Hackbarth, DDS

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Important Warning

Dear Patient,

I am writing to you to share some important information about ***newly identified dental risks*** that are associated with certain types of drugs that are becoming more widely prescribed. This is not to alarm you, but to simply inform you. These drugs are called bisphosphonates. **Bisphosphonate drugs are: Aradia, Zometa, Didronel, Actonel, Skelid, Fosamax, and Boniva.** They are usually prescribed to aid in the fight against osteoporosis. Sometimes they are used to reduce bone loss and bone pain in certain cancer patients.

These risks include poor healing, spontaneous intraoral ulceration, and bone necrosis. These conditions may be serious and treatment for them is not routinely successful. The exact risk is unknown at this time. . It is known that the risk continues for some time after the discontinuation of these drugs. What is not known is how long the risk persists. In fact it may be for years, or it may not diminish at all.

The most serious complication is bone necrosis (rotting away) of the jaw bones. Complete prevention of this complication is not currently possible; however, preventative dental care reduces the incidence, and non-surgical procedures can usually prevent this complication.

There are also cases of bone necrosis associated with the bone loss from active periodontal (gum) disease.

In light of these facts we are recommending that you let us help you maintain the highest level of dental care for your mouth—that care that is meant to control and prevent disease. The best action is to avoid any type of oral surgery—especially extractions, so **if you have a history of taking any of these drugs** it is important that you minimize your chances of needing any extractions.

I am posting two recent scientific articles about this problem on my web site, www.texasdentalhealth.com, if you would like more information.

Please call us and find out how we can help you.

Sincerely,

John Hackbarth, DDS