

Bisphosphonate Guideline Update and QI Searches

The 2023 Osteoporosis Canada Guidelines now recommend initial bisphosphonate therapy for a duration of 3-6 years. Taking oral bisphosphonates for more than 5 years results in no difference in hip or overall number of fractures and harms may be increased with longer durations of bisphosphonates after 6 years, including atypical femur fractures, and osteonecrosis of the jaw.

To support the physicians and patients we serve, NYTHP's Partner, North York Family Health Team, is sharing a QI plan to identify and counsel eligible patients. This includes suggested discussion points when reviewing with patients as well as queries to identify eligible patients.

Please see below for queries for Accuro and PSS. **If you would like help setting up the query, or any other digital/EMR supports, you can request the FREE service of Edwin Alvarado, our PCN Digital Support Consultant, here: <https://www.nythp-pcn.ca/digital-support-consultant>.**

For PSS users:

- Please import the search file available at this link: https://nyfht-my.sharepoint.com/personal/sarackal_nyfht_com/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fsarackal%5Fnyfht%5Fcom%2FDocuments%2FNYTHP%20Sharing%2FPSS%2FSearches&ga=1&LOF=1
- For instructions on how to import a search, please refer to this guide: https://help.pssuiteemr.com/5.9/on/en/Content/03_User/Gathering_data/Importing_exporting_searches.htm?Highlight=searches

For Accuro users:

- The query is available in Accuro Alert Publisher as 'NYFHT_Bisphosphonate DRUG HOLIDAY'.
- For instructions on how to download the query/alert please follow this link and refer to the 'Download an Alert' section: <https://userguide.accuroemr.com/index.htm#t=7477.htm&rhsearch=download%20an%20alert&ux=search>

WHO?

- Patients age ≥ 50 years, on bisphosphonate for osteoporosis AND
- Patients with bisphosphonate use ≥ 6 years
- Patients with adequate response to bisphosphonate
- Patients who agree to bisphosphonate drug holiday

HOW?

- EMR query
 - EMR query will identify patients age \geq 50 and on bisphosphonate \geq 6 yrs.

OPPORTUNISTIC DISCUSSION POINTS

- There has been an update to recommendations on how long we should continue medications for osteoporosis. For people who take bisphosphonates (including risedronate, alendronate, or zoledronic acid), the guidelines now recommend you only need to be on it for 3 to 6 years.
- The effect of these medications can last a long time in our bodies. Taking these medications for more than 5 years does not seem to further reduce your risk of having fractures overall.
- In contrast, taking these medications for longer than 6 years might increase your risk for unusual or stress fractures in the thigh bone, or problems with bones in the jaw.
- If you do stop this medication, we should recheck your bone mineral density within 3-5 years to see if you should restart the medication:
- If you have a history of fracture or other risk factors for rapid bone loss, we should recheck your bone mineral density earlier, between 1- 3 years (dependent on MOHLTC criteria for repeat BMD).
- While you are on this “drug holiday”, you should continue to support your bone health with adequate calcium and vitamin D intake, and regular exercises to improve your balance, strength and function.
- If you do not or cannot stop this medication, we can continue to monitor and discuss ways to reduce the risk of such side effects.