

ETIDRONATE DISODIUM

Other names: Arrow-Etidronate® Didrone®



Important note: The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

Why you are taking this medication?

Etidronate belongs to a group of medicines called bisphosphonates. Bisphosphonates can be used to help prevent bone diseases such as osteoporosis or Paget's disease. Etidronate works directly to increase bone mass (bulk) in the spine and other bones by inhibiting the re-absorption of bone in the body. Also, preventing the re-absorption of bone, etidronate helps prevent irregular or abnormal disposition of bone in the joints, useful in the case of Paget's disease.

When to take this medication

Do not take calcium rich foods (e.g. dairy products), antacids, vitamins with mineral supplements and some medicines (e.g. iron preparations) as these preparations can interfere with the absorption of etidronate.

Etidronate must be taken on an empty stomach. This means that etidronate is taken at least 2 hours before or 2 hours after food any other medication.

Osteoporosis

For osteoporosis, your doctor may prescribe two medicines, etidronate and calcium tablets which are taken over a treatment course of 90 days. Etidronate and calcium **must not be taken together at the same time.**

Treatment starts with:

- Day 1 - Day 14 Take two etidronate 200mg tablets every day
- Day 15 - Day 90 Take calcium 500mg every day and then after 90 days start the cycle again from Day 1.

Paget's disease

Your doctor will have prescribed the required dose for you. You will be treated for three or six months depending on the dose and then treatment is stopped for three months or more before having another cycle of treatment.

If you miss a dose

Take as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for the next dose. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

Side effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- fever
- sore throat, infection
- bruising of the skin
- red skin rash
- pins and needles in the hands and feet
- confusion
- bone pain (this can be experienced when treating Paget's disease)
- jaw pain, especially after dental treatment

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects:

- diarrhoea
- nausea
- leg cramps
- burning of the tongue
- constipation
- headache
- stomach upset (e.g. flatulence / wind)

The list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you.

Other medication

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicine including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

Avoid taking antacids, calcium or mineral containing medications with etidronate.

Storage

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist