



Pamidronate Informational Handout for Patients & Families

What is Pamidronate?

Pamidronate belongs to a family of medicines called Bisphosphonates. Bisphosphonates slow down the rate of bone breakdown. Pamidronate increases bone strength, decreases bone pain & may help reduce the chance of developing fractures in children who have certain type of bone conditions such as osteogenesis imperfecta, osteoporosis or who have fragile bones from other causes, such as long-term steroid treatment.

How is this medication given?

Pamidronate is given as an IV infusion over 4 hours. This most commonly occurs in the Medical Day Unit on 4C in the hospital. Children do not stay overnight at the hospital. It is usually a full day at the hospital.

The typical schedule is either:

1. One infusion for three days in a row, repeated every 4 months, OR
2. One infusion every month for 3 months followed by a 1-month break.

The child repeats these cycles until their treatment is complete. The total length of treatment is different for each child and will be decided by the bone health team.

The first dose is always split into two subsequent days for both schedules. Your doctor will let you know if your child has a different schedule.

What are the possible side effects?

- Flu-like Symptoms

The most common side effects are flu-like symptoms (fever, body aches, fatigue, nausea). If fever occurs, it should resolve in 48 hours. These symptoms often only occur with the first two doses of Pamidronate. They usually do not occur with subsequent treatments. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and/or Gravol may help with these symptoms.

- Low Calcium Levels

Pamidronate lowers the amount of calcium in the blood. For this reason, your child should take extra calcium (either through diet or supplements, such as TUMS) for 3 days before every infusion, the day of every infusion and 3 days after every infusion. Symptoms of low calcium include any of the following:

- Tingling, pins and needles, or numbness around the mouth, fingers or toes
- Muscle cramps or spasms

- Other Uncommon Possible Side Effects

- Rash or itchiness
- Eye redness or irritation

Call your doctor or nurse should your child develop any of these symptoms.



How will I know if the Pamidronate is working?

Most children will have an improvement in bone pain.

We monitor the response to Pamidronate by DEXA (Bone Mineral Density) scans which look at the density of your child's bones and by x-rays of your child's spine

Before your child receives this medicine...

1. Please tell your doctor if your child has any of the following:

- Had a bad or allergic reaction to Pamidronate or any other bisphosphonate medication before
- Kidney problems – Pamidronate may build up in the bloodstream, which may increase the chance of side effects
- Dental problems or is planning to have any dental procedures in the future.

2. Your child may need to have a dental examination before starting the Pamidronate. This is needed because some patients who have dental infections may be at risk of problems with their jawbone following dental procedures (such as tooth extraction) while on Pamidronate.

3. Your child will need to be taking enough vitamin D and calcium from either their diet or supplements. Please discuss your child's requirements with your doctor.

How do I book my appointment?

We ask the family to contact 4C at 416-813-7654 x 206583 to book the infusions. The infusions are administered during the week (Monday – Friday).

For any urgent issues, please call the endocrine fellow on call at 416-813-7500