

Are You Following The Doctor's Orders?

Taking Your Medicine As Prescribed Is Key To Healthy Bones

(NAPSA)—From a very young age, we are taught to “follow the doctor’s orders.” Doctors can help guide us to the best way to take care of ourselves. But a recent survey suggests that many people may be ignoring this age-old advice.

The new survey showed that three out of four Americans do not always take their prescription medicine as directed by their doctor. Nearly half of those polled said they do not stay on their medicine. For some people, it’s simply a case of forgetting to take it. Other people say they just stopped taking it before the supply ran out, took less than the recommended amount or didn’t go to the pharmacy at all to fill the prescription in the first place.

This trend could be a problem for the millions of people facing chronic diseases, including the nearly 44 million Americans age 50 or older who are threatened by osteoporosis, including postmenopausal osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is a disease that causes bones to become brittle and more likely to break.

“People need to remember that medications do not work if we don’t take them as prescribed,” said Barbara Dehn, nurse practitioner at the Women Physicians Ob/Gyn Medical Group, Mt. View, California. “For women with postmenopausal osteoporosis, this is very important because prescription medicine can help make bones stronger and may reduce the chance of a fracture.”

Women age 50 or older who don’t treat osteoporosis can lose bone mass. This means that their



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bones get thinner and they are more likely to experience a fracture. Up to one in two women age 50 or older with untreated osteoporosis may experience a bone fracture.

“If you have been diagnosed with osteoporosis, then talk to your doctor about treatment options such as once-monthly Boniva. This is a prescription medicine used to treat and help prevent osteoporosis in women after menopause. Boniva helps increase bone mass and helps reduce the chance of having a spinal fracture [break]. It is not known how long Boniva works for the treatment and prevention of osteoporosis and you should see your doctor regularly to determine if Boniva is still right for you,” Dehn said. “Remember to take your medication as your doctor prescribed so your treatment has the best chance at helping to prevent bone loss.”

Here are some helpful tips to help you stay on track with your bone health treatment plan:

Tip 1: Ask your doctor about your medicine: It is important to understand how to take your medication properly. Prepare questions to ask your doctor about your medication—such as when you need to take it, how often or if you should eat beforehand—and how it might affect you.

Tip 2: Find out about free programs that provide support: Ask your doctor for tools such as brochures and videos that can help you learn more about postmenopausal osteoporosis and treatment. Programs like MyBONIVA can also help you make the most of your prescription treatment plan. The program includes a welcome kit, quarterly newsletters with helpful tips on leading a healthy and active life, and monthly e-mail reminders to help you remember to take your medication. Visit www.MyBoniva.com for more information.

Tip 3: Make a standing “date” on your treatment day: Make a special appointment with a close friend or organize a different fun activity for each day that you have to take your prescription treatment. Involving a friend or family member in your routine can help remind you to stick to it.

Tip 4: Create a plan that works for you: You can use a combination of any or all of these tips to help you stick with your treatment plan. You should see your doctor regularly to determine if Boniva is still right for you.

Please see below for Important Safety Information. Indication: BONIVA is a prescription medicine used to treat or prevent osteoporosis in women after menopause. BONIVA helps increase bone mass and helps reduce the chance of having a spinal fracture (break).

It is not known how long BONIVA works for the treatment and prevention of osteoporosis. You should see your doctor regularly to determine if BONIVA is still right for you.

Important Safety Information

You should not take BONIVA if you have certain problems with your esophagus (the tube that connects your mouth and stomach), low blood calcium, cannot sit or stand for at least 60 minutes, or are allergic to BONIVA or any of its ingredients.

BONIVA can cause serious side effects including problems with the esophagus; low blood calcium; bone, joint or muscle pain; severe jaw-bone problems; and unusual thighbone fractures.

Before starting BONIVA, tell your doctor if you have problems with swallowing, stomach or digestive problems, have low blood calcium, plan to have dental surgery or teeth removed or have kidney problems.

Stop taking BONIVA and tell your doctor right away if you have pain or trouble swallowing, chest pain, or severe or continuing heartburn, as these may be signs of serious upper digestive problems. Call your doctor immediately if jaw problems, hip, groin or thigh pain develops, or if you have symptoms of low blood calcium such as spasms, twitching, cramps in your muscles, or numbness or tingling in your fingers, toes or around your mouth.

Follow the dosing instructions for once-monthly BONIVA carefully.

The most common side effects are back pain, heartburn, stomach area pain, pain in your arms and legs, diarrhea, headache, muscle pain and flu-like symptoms.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA at www.fda.gov/medwatch or by calling 1-800-FDA-1088.

Talk to your doctor for more information or if you have questions about your treatment.

Please see full Prescribing Information and Medication Guide for additional important safety information.