

# HOW IS PRIMARY BREAST CANCER TREATED?

## Bisphosphonates

**BREAST  
CANCER  
NOW** The research  
& care charity

This information is for anyone who has primary breast cancer and wants to know more about how it is treated.

It is written by Breast Cancer Now, a charity that helps people who have breast cancer and other breast conditions.

You can also get Breast Cancer Now's longer free booklet **Treating primary breast cancer.**

# WHAT IS IN THIS INFORMATION?

---

In this information is a simple summary of bisphosphonates during treatment for primary breast cancer. Click on a question below to go straight to that section.

## BISPHOSPHONATES

**What are bisphosphonates?**

**What are the side effects of bisphosphonates?**

# BISPHOSPHONATES

## What are bisphosphonates?

Bisphosphonates are drugs. They have more than one use in treating primary breast cancer.

You may be offered bisphosphonates for the reasons listed here.

- 1.** To keep your bones strong when you are having another treatment that might have the side effect of weakening them.
- 2.** If you are a woman who has been through the change (also called the menopause). Bisphosphonates may make it less likely that your primary breast cancer will spread to other parts of your body when your treatment has finished.

If you are offered bisphosphonates to make it less likely that your breast cancer will spread, you'll probably be asked to have them for at least three years.

# SIDE EFFECTS

## What are the side effects of bisphosphonates?

Bisphosphonates can cause different side effects depending on which sort of bisphosphonate you are having.

Your treatment team will tell you about the side effects you might get with the sort of bisphosphonate you are taking.

Always tell your breast care nurse or treatment team how your treatment is affecting you. They often have ideas to help make side effects easier to cope with.

# INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

## Where can I find out more about my treatments?

There are more simple summary slides about treating primary breast cancer. Find them by clicking on subject areas at this website page

[breastcancer.org/primarytreatment](https://breastcancer.org/primarytreatment)

You can get Breast Cancer Now's longer free booklet  
**Treating primary breast cancer**

Call our Helpline on **0808 800 6000**