

Prolia

Introduction

Prolia (Denosumab) is an injection that reduces bone turnover and thus causes an increase in bone density and reduced bone loss over time. It is given as a 6 monthly injection under the skin. It is important that it is given on time as the risk of fractures increases if it is delayed.

You should read the patient information leaflet (PIL) which comes with the medication before taking Prolia.

You should not take Prolia if you are allergic to any of its contents, latex or you are pregnant/trying to get pregnant or breastfeeding.

Investigations

Prior to treatment and at regular intervals (normally yearly) a blood test will be needed to make sure you have adequate calcium levels. Our information leaflet on bone health gives more information about how to maintain your calcium and vitamin D levels, a supplement may be required. A DEXA scan will be done before treatment and normally 2 years after starting. After this it may be done 3-5 yearly depending on results.

Oral health

You should maintain good dental hygiene while on Prolia. You may wish to get a dental check before starting and you should advise your dentist that you are taking Prolia if you require any dental procedure.

Stopping

Normally Prolia is prescribed indefinitely but if you are thinking of stopping you should book a consultation to discuss other treatments to avoid rapid bone loss.

Side effects

A full list will be in the PIL that accompanies your medication. There is a small increased risk of skin infections. There is a very rare risk of

osteonecrosis of the jaw (ONJ) where delayed healing can occur particularly after a dental procedure. There have only been a few cases worldwide with osteoporosis treatments so it is extremely rare, but you should maintain good dental care.

Appointments

Normally you will be seen and assessed for your bone health. A DEXA scan will be arranged, and you will be asked to come in for a discussion if your bone density is low. This treatment is not covered by DVC or GMS so there will be a charge. If we are considering Prolia the timeline is normally as follows:

- Initial appointment to discuss treatment (standard appointment charge €75).
- Blood tests if required (€45 with us or free through hospital clinic).
- Review appointment to discuss bloods and provide prescription if required (review appointment charge €60).
- Appointment for injection of Prolia (€35).
- 6 monthly appointments to renew prescription (standard appointment charge €75).
- 6 monthly appointments for injection or injection can be self-administered (€35).
- Yearly blood tests (€45 with us or free through hospital clinic).

You should make sure that you make your appointment to renew your prescription with enough time to get your bloods done prior to your injection being due. It is important that the injection is given every 6 months without significant delay. The injection can be self-administered but most patients will make an appointment to get it given in the surgery. Leave the medication with your pharmacy and pick it up on the day of your appointment for us to administer it. You will need an appointment for your prescription and an appointment for the injection (if not self-administering) every 6 months.