








**How to give Bisphosphonates**  
 e.g Alendronic acid tablets, Risedronate tablets,

**What are Bisphosphonates?**

A group of medicines that bind to bone to strengthen and help prevent fractures. The most commonly prescribed bisphosphonate is alendronic acid (Fosamax). These medications are usually given once weekly.

**How should they be taken?**

	They should be taken immediately on getting out of bed in a morning
	On an empty stomach – patient must not have had any tea, coffee, juice, breakfast or other swallowed medication.
	Must be stood or sat upright. Being propped up on pillows is insufficient; must be sat up as if in an upright chair.
	The tablet must be swallowed whole with a full glass (around 200ml) of plain tap water.
	Tablets should not be sucked, chewed or split.
	Sit or stand upright for 30 minutes after taking the tablet
	No food, drink (other than water) or other swallowed medication for 30 minutes after taking the tablet.

**Why is this important?**

If bisphosphonates are not taken according to the dose instructions there is a high risk of side effects and/or the medication not working.

Calcium tablets (Evacal, Adcal D3, Calcichew D3) are often prescribed alongside bisphosphonates to help them work more effectively. They can affect the absorption of bisphosphonates. They should be taken at least 4 hours after the bisphosphonate is taken. This may require the calcium tablets to be moved to lunchtime.