**FACCTSHEET**

Administration of Alendronic Acid 70mg Tablets
Information for carers

**What is it used for?**
Alendronic acid is a type of medicine called a bisphosphonate. Bisphosphonates prevent the breakdown of bone and are used to treat osteoporosis and to prevent fractures.

**How should it be taken?**
It is very important that the instructions for taking these tablets are followed completely. This is because when alendronic acid is taken by mouth it can cause irritation and ulceration to the oesophagus (food pipe). Following the instructions below minimises this risk. If you are unclear about anything ask your Pharmacist for advice.

- One 70mg tablet is taken once a week on the same day each week.
- The tablet should be taken in the morning at least 30 minutes before the first food, drink or medicine of the day.
- The tablet should be swallowed whole with a glass of plain water (at least 200ml, not mineral water) whilst sitting or standing in an upright position. Do not crush, chew or suck the tablet.
- The patient should not lie down for at least 30 minutes after taking the tablet.
- They should not eat or drink anything other than plain water for at least 30 minutes after taking the tablet. This is because food and some drinks (including mineral water) can interfere with the absorption of the medicine from the gut and hence make it less effective.
- No other medicine should be given by mouth at the same time as this tablet, or for at least 30 minutes after taking the tablet.
- For patients also taking calcium containing medication e.g. Accrete D3; it is particularly important that the medication containing calcium is not given at the same time as alendronic acid. Calcium supplements should ideally be given at least 4 hours after. In practice this means that twice daily calcium supplements should be given at lunchtime and teatime.
- If the patient is also taking other medication given before breakfast e.g. levothyroxine, lansoprazole; alendronic acid should be given first, at least one hour before breakfast and then wait 30 minutes before giving other pre-breakfast medication. Times of administration should be recorded as evidence that the medication has been given at the correct time intervals.

Please inform the GP/Pharmacist straight away if the patient is unable to take the medication as above, to discuss any alternative options.

**Other issues**
- Inform the patient’s GP straight away if the patient has:
  
  - any difficulty in swallowing,
  - pain on swallowing,
  - pain behind the breastbone or heartburn
- Ensure that the patient has regular dental check-ups and has good oral hygiene. Seek advice from a dentist straight away if there are any problems with the mouth or teeth. Ensure that the dentist knows that the patient is taking this medication. This is because this medicine has been associated with a rare problem with the jaw.
- See patient information leaflet for further advice about the product.