

Fact Sheet for Osteoporosis Medications

There is no cure for osteoporosis. The best treatment is prevention with healthy eating and exercise. However, there are some medicines that can help to prevent or treat osteoporosis. Your doctor may prescribe one of them. These medicines help by slowing bone loss and decreasing your chance of a fracture.

Bisphosphonates: Fosamax, Actonel, Boniva

- This kind of medicine should be taken with a full glass of water before you eat first thing in the morning. Do not lie down for at least ½ hour after you take the medicine. You might have a sore throat, nausea, heartburn, or abdominal discomfort from this medicine. If you have any of these symptoms, call your doctor.

Calcitonin

- This medicine comes in two different forms: a spray for the nose (Miacalcin) or a daily injection (Calcimar). You might have flushing of your face and hands, urinary frequency, nausea, or a skin rash from the injection. You might have a runny nose from the nasal spray.

Selective Estrogen Receptor Modulators (SERMs): Evista

- Can help prevent bone loss. Side effects are not common, but can include hot flashes or blood clots in your legs.

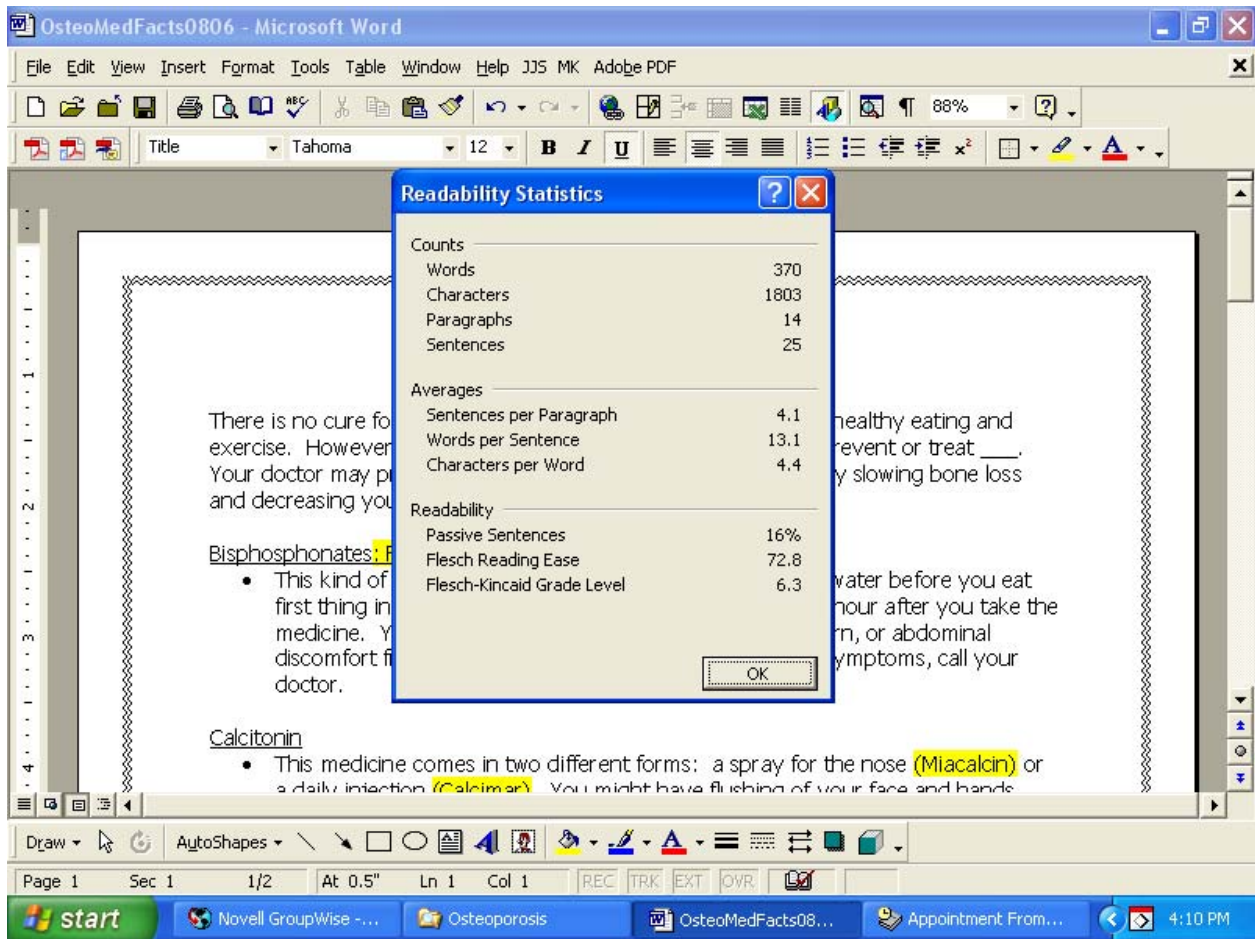
Parathyroid Hormone

- This medicine, Forteo, must be injected and is a form of human parathyroid hormone. It is only approved for use for up to 24 months. It is usually used for women who are at high risk of a fracture and have not done well on other therapies. You might feel dizzy or have nausea or leg cramps while taking this medicine.

Estrogen/Hormone Therapy

- Due to the risks, you should not take estrogen just to prevent osteoporosis. If you have other reasons for taking this medication, it may help osteoporosis as an added benefit. This medicine usually comes in a pill taken every day. Or it may be a skin patch. If you have not had a hysterectomy, this treatment may cause vaginal bleeding, breast tenderness, mood changes, blood clots in your legs, or gallbladder disease. Hormone therapy may also increase your risk of breast cancer, stroke, and heart attack. So you should think carefully before using it.

Remember to talk to your doctor and pharmacist about your medicines and any side effects you might have



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