

## SPINE SAFETY WARNING:

### **Information for Healthcare Professionals: Bisphosphonates- Possible Cause Of Severe And Sometimes Incapacitating Bone, Joint, and/or Muscle Pain**

According to MedWatch, FDA informed healthcare professionals and patients of the possibility of severe and sometimes incapacitating bone, joint and/or muscle (musculoskeletal) pain in patients taking bisphosphonates. Although severe musculoskeletal pain is included in the prescribing information for all bisphosphonates, the association between bisphosphonates and severe musculoskeletal pain may be overlooked by healthcare professionals, delaying diagnosis, prolonging pain and/or impairment, and necessitating the use of analgesics. The severe musculoskeletal pain may occur within days, months or years after starting a bisphosphonate. Some patients have reported complete relief of symptoms after discontinuing the bisphosphonate, whereas others have reported slow or incomplete resolution. The risk factors for and incidence of severe musculoskeletal pain associated with bisphosphonates are unknown.

Healthcare professionals should consider whether bisphosphonate use might be responsible for severe musculoskeletal pain in patients who present with these symptoms and consider temporary or permanent discontinuation of the drug.

Read the complete 2007 and 2008 MedWatch Safety Summary including a link to the FDA Drug Information Page regarding this issue at:

<http://www.fda.gov/medwatch/safety/2008/safety08.htm#Bisphosphonates>

The North American Spine Society is committed to quality patient care through promotion of patient safety and prevention of medical errors. NASS monitors a variety of government and other resources for patient safety related notices that may be useful to our members. Information from these notices is also archived on the NASS website at

<http://www.spine.org/Pages/PracticePolicy/ClinicalCare/SpineSafetyAlerts/Default.aspx>. This information is provided as a service for information and education only.