Staying Power: Closing The Adherence Gap In Osteoporosis

Adherence Fact Sheet

Lack of adherence: a global issue
- The problem of adherence to therapy has emerged as a significant challenge to the successful management of osteoporosis.
- After six months, more than a fifth of patients stop taking their osteoporosis treatment.\(^1\)
- After one year, over half of patients prescribed a once-weekly bisphosphonate stop treatment.\(^1,2,3\)
- After two years, over two thirds of patients on a daily treatment are likely to have stopped taking their therapy.\(^4\)
- When treatment is taken as recommended, it may reduce the risk of vertebral fractures by up to 65% and of non-vertebral fractures by up to 53%.\(^5\)

The importance of staying on treatment
- Those who do not stay on their osteoporosis treatment face a significantly greater risk of fractures. People who have suffered three or more fractures are 10 times more likely to experience another break.\(^6\)
- Osteoporosis-related fractures can cause significant pain, reduce quality of life and, in some cases, may even be fatal:
  - Over a quarter of patients who suffer a hip fracture die within a year.\(^7\)
  - In the six months following a vertebral fracture, people aged 50-54 years have a 30 to 50 fold increased risk of suffering another.\(^8\)
  - Patients who have suffered two or three vertebral fractures may have problems with everyday activities such as shopping, dressing or going to the toilet.\(^9\)
  - After a hip fracture, 95% of patients require surgery and, of these, less than one third will regain their previous level of mobility and over a third will require constant care.\(^10\)
  - Reducing fractures through improved adherence would have a significant impact on healthcare systems:
    - In 2000, Europeans suffered an estimated 3.79 million fractures amounting to direct costs in the region of €31.7 billion.\(^11\)
    - The worldwide cost burden of osteoporosis (for all ages) is expected to increase to almost €106 billion by 2050.\(^12\)
Encouraging patients to stay on therapy

- The IOF Adherence Gap report in 2005 explored the issue of why osteoporosis patients don’t continue with their treatment:
  - Just over half of patients could not recall being told how long to stay on treatment. 13
  - Over two-thirds of patients were not aware of the benefits of their treatment. 13
  - Seven out of 10 physicians acknowledged that they did not know why so many patients had stopped taking an osteoporosis treatment. 13
  - Eight out of 10 of physicians agreed that regular follow-up with patients, better information on treatment options and more convenient dosing options were needed to address non-adherence. 13

References