

FIGURE 2.

PATIENT EDUCATION TIP SHEET: MANAGING BONE HEALTH IN MULTIPLE MYELOMA

KEY POINTS

Most patients with multiple myeloma will develop bone lesions, leading to pain, possible fractures, and decreased mobility. Maintaining bone health is important for reducing pain and the risk for fractures, as well as for maximizing mobility. Side effects from treatment, like neuropathy or muscle weakness, can affect your ability to move safely. Your healthcare provider may change your medication dose or schedule to help manage your symptoms.

PREVENTION OF FRACTURES

Make sure you have tests done if they are recommended by your healthcare provider.

- Laboratory tests (e.g., complete blood count, creatinine)
- Bone health monitoring laboratory tests (e.g., vitamin D, alkaline phosphatase, calcium, specific hormones for men and women)
- Radiologic imaging (e.g., positron-emission tomography, computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, bone survey, bone density test)

Take medications and supplements if they are prescribed or recommended by your healthcare provider.

- Bisphosphonates (e.g., zoledronic acid, pamidronate)
- Supplements (e.g., calcium, vitamin D); your healthcare provider may check your kidney function while you are taking these.
- Pain medication for bone pain

Maximize your nutrition.

- Review a dietary plan with your healthcare provider.

- Meet with a nutritionist if recommended by your healthcare provider.
- Perform good daily oral hygiene and have a dental examination every six months. Be sure to inform your dentist if you are taking a bone-strengthening medication.

Maximize your functioning.

- Talk to your healthcare provider about a plan for daily physical activities, including activities that help with balance, strength, and fitness.
- If needed, use devices to help you with mobility, including a cane or walker.
- If needed, use pain medication to help decrease your pain and improve your mobility.
- Improve your sleep quality to promote your well-being and decrease your pain and fatigue.

Be aware of symptoms that require immediate attention.

- Sudden onset of pain (may indicate a new fracture)
- Back pain with sudden change in sensation in lower or upper extremities or loss of bowel or bladder control (may indicate spinal nerve damage)
- Noticeable changes in mental status, such as increased sleepiness, confusion, or irritability
- Severe constipation, nausea or vomiting, and excessive thirst and urination
- Falling, tripping, or loss of balance

Note. Based on information from Denlinger et al., 2014; National Comprehensive Cancer Network, 2017b, 2017d; Rock et al., 2012; Schmitz et al., 2010.