

■ **Short-term intensive treatment with ibandronic acid is effective for severe, opioid-resistant bone pain in patients with cancer metastases**, report researchers from Belgium. Their open-label pilot study included 18 such patients aged 33–76 years who received IV ibandronic acid 4mg on four consecutive days every 3–4 weeks, plus opioids. Pain scores were significantly reduced from baseline within 7 days of the initiation of ibandronic acid; this improvement was maintained at day 21 and day 42. Importantly, this was not due to increased analgesic consumption. QOL, according to the Edmonton Symptom Assessment System well-being item scale, was significantly improved from baseline by day 7 and throughout the study. Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group mean performance status scores were significantly improved at days 21 and 42, compared with baseline. Furthermore, patients' functional status, according to Edmonton Functional Assessment Tool scores, was significantly improved, relative to baseline, by day 21.

Mancini I, et al. Efficacy and safety of ibandronate in the treatment of opioid-resistant bone pain associated with metastatic bone disease: a pilot study. *Journal of Clinical Oncology* 22: 3587-3592, No. 17, 1 Sep 2004 800979330