

Zoledronic Acid

A Viewpoint by Allan Lipton

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Over the past decade, pamidronic acid has become the standard treatment for patients with hypercalcaemia of malignancy. Side-chain alterations of the bisphosphonate P-C-P backbone have yielded newer, more potent bisphosphonates. Zoledronic acid is the most potent bisphosphonate in most preclinical models. This heterocyclic im-

idazole third-generation bisphosphonate is 2 to 3 logs more potent than pamidronic acid in most *in vitro* and *in vivo* model systems. Data are now available from a phase III trial of zoledronic acid versus pamidronic acid in patients with hypercalcaemia of malignancy; zoledronic acid has efficacy which is superior to that of its comparator and can be administered intravenously over a 5- to 15-minute period. Data on the efficacy of this new potent bisphosphonate in patients with both lytic and blastic bone metastases from a variety of cancers is eagerly awaited. ▲