HORIZON OMS
OF CHICAGO
Oral Surgery & Dental Implants
Expert surgical care. Modern precision.

6 E St. Charles Road • Lombard, IL 60148
(630) 425-2555 • Fax: (630) 425-2554
Contact@horizon-oms.com • horizon-oms.com

Understanding MRONJ

A patient guide to jaw healing risks linked to certain bone medications

MRONJ is uncommon. For most patients taking osteoporosis-dose medications, the risk stays low.

WHAT IS MRONJ?

MRONJ stands for medication-related osteonecrosis of the jaw. In simple terms, it means an area of jawbone heals more slowly than expected and may stay exposed or irritated.

WHY CAN IT HAPPEN?

These medications slow bone turnover. That helps strengthen bone elsewhere in the body and reduce fractures or complications from cancer in bone.

In the jaw, that same slowdown can make healing after an extraction, denture sore spot, gum injury, or infection less predictable.

COMMON MEDICATIONS

• Bisphosphonates: alendronate (Fosamax), risedronate (Actonel), ibandronate (Boniva), zoledronic acid (Reclast, Zometa), pamidronate (Aredia).

• Denosumab: Prolia and Xgeva. Some cancer therapies can also add risk, especially when combined with these medicines.

HOW COMMON IS IT?

• Oral or IV bisphosphonates used for osteoporosis: about 2 to 5 cases per 10,000 patients.

• Osteoporosis-dose denosumab (Prolia): about 4 to 30 cases per 10,000 patients.

• Higher-dose cancer-related treatment carries more risk overall, especially over time.

SIGNS TO WATCH FOR

• A tooth socket or gum area that does not heal as expected.

• Exposed bone, pain, swelling, drainage, bad taste, or denture soreness that does not settle.

HOW TO LOWER YOUR RISK

• Do not stop your medication on your own. Talk with the doctor who prescribed it.

• Tell your dentist or oral surgeon what you take and how long you have been on it.

• Keep up with cleanings, home care, and denture adjustments, and bring an updated medication list to visits.

Bring an updated medication list to your visit so we can review it together.

General education only. Your care plan may differ based on your anatomy and procedure