

## **RECRUITMENT PERIOD**

**For patients with osteonecrosis of the jaw (ONJ) or with suspected ONJ  
Sept. 2007- Febr. 2009**

**Study Status: OPEN**

Scientists at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine investigate the causes of osteonecrosis of the jaw (ONJ) and a possible link with bisphosphonates, a common class of medications used to treat bone loss or bone cancer.

The study is approved by the Harvard Medical School Institutional Review Board and it is sponsored by the National Institute of Dental & Craniofacial Research, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This cutting-edge research aims to describe what causes osteonecrosis (the biologic basis of the disease) and to identify molecular markers that predispose an individual to develop ONJ.

The research team will attempt to develop methods to diagnose ONJ as early as possible and to develop a blood test that screens people on bisphosphonates for ONJ risk. The research team is led by Dr. Zavras and includes scientists at the School of Dental Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Children's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital.

Osteonecrosis of the jaw is a rare condition that affects the jaw bones. A small number of bisphosphonate users develop necrotic bone lesions that persist for several weeks or months. Treating ONJ requires patience, a close collaboration of dental professionals with the patient's medical team, and many follow up visits.

If you or someone you know has osteonecrosis of the jaw, or if you believe you may be at increased risk, please contact us. We will ask you to sign an informed consent that documents your willingness to participate in this important study, and explain the study's methods.

If you decide to participate, we ask that you devote approximately 30 minutes of your time to this project. We require that you answer a questionnaire (15-30min.) about your medical and dental history, including medication use, and ask you to provide a saliva sample. DNA from your saliva will then be genotyped at no cost to you.

Participants from throughout the continental United States are eligible to join this investigation. You may choose to visit our clinic at the Harvard Dental Center (188 Longwood Ave., Boston), or we can work together to obtain your data and a saliva sample through the mail.

### **BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION**

Knowledge gained from the study might benefit the millions of patients on bisphosphonates to make informed decisions about their care. We may even be able to develop a screening test for risk assessment.

### **SPONSORS OF THE STUDY**

National Institute of Dental Craniofacial Research, NIH  
Harvard University

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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