

## New Osteoporosis Treatment Approved

On April 9, 2019, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced the approval of a new bone-building medication for the treatment of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women at high risk for fracture. EVENITY (romosozumab-aqqg) is a helpful addition to our choices for treating high-risk patients.

The other bone building medications, Forteo (teriparatide) and Tymlos (abaloparatide) are taken as daily, self-administered injections for a maximum of 24-months in a lifetime. EVENITY is different. It is given as 2 injections (usually one in each arm) administered by a healthcare professional once monthly for a total of 12 months. It is essential that treatment with any of the bone building drugs is followed by another medication to consolidate and enhance the effects. It is a "ONE-TWO" punch against osteoporosis to improve bone health.

What does "bone building" mean? After all, all osteoporosis medications that are now used can increase bone density, make bone stronger, and reduce the risk of bones breaking. A bone building medication does all of that and more. It actually improves the structure of bone that has deteriorated from the effects of osteoporosis. That is important because osteoporosis

means that bone density is low AND bone structure is poor. The ideal treatment is one that restores the structure first and then follows with another treatment to maintain the improved structure.

Forteo and Tymlos are derivatives of naturally occurring parathyroid hormones. They are very effective, but EVENITY takes a different approach. It is a monoclonal antibody that blocks sclerostin, a naturally occurring protein that inhibits the formation of new bone. By inhibiting an inhibitor of bone formation, more bone is built and bones become stronger very quickly, with a 75% reduction in the risk of spine fractures after 12 months.

There is uncertainty about the risk of cardiovascular diseases (heart attacks and strokes) with EVENITY. The largest study in postmenopausal woman showed no problem in the area, but a second smaller study in slightly older women showed a possible increased risk in those taking this medication compared with those on placebo. Because of this, we do not usually recommend EVENITY for anyone who has had a heart attack or stroke in the past year or anyone at high risk for heart attacks or strokes. As with all medications, treatment decisions should consider the balance of expected benefits and possible risks.

### Staff

**E. Michael Lewiecki, MD, FACP, CCD**

*Osteoporosis Director*

**Lance A. Rudolph, MD, CCD**

*Research Director*

**Julia R. Chavez, CNP**

*Adult Healthcare*

**Sarah Erb, CNP, CCD**

*Osteoporosis Nurse Practitioner*

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*Management Director*

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*Research Manager/Coordinator*

**Devona Martinez**

*Research Executive Assistant*

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*Drug Study Coordinator*

**Karen Strickler, BS, CCT, CCRC**

*Drug Study Coordinator*

**Linda Weakland**

*Research Recruitment Specialist*

**Daniel Widholm, RT(R)(BD), CBDT**

*Bone Densitometry Technologist*

**Jacquelyn Garcia, RT(R)**

*Bone Densitometry Technologist*

**Janette Wiggins**

*Medical Assistant*

**Carrie Conger**

*Medical Assistant*

**Alicia Delgado**

*Medical Assistant*

**Criselda Rion**

*Medical Assistant*

**Monica Tanny**

*Osteoporosis Treatment Coordinator*

**Carly Dobbins**

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**Rachel Bruch**

*Office Assistant*



## Clinical Research

### Are you interested in participating in a research study?

Our clinical research program is recruiting patients to participate in studies to test new medications and evaluate new uses for currently available drugs. By participating in a study, you will have the opportunity to use one of these medications, have free examinations and tests, and receive reimbursement for your time and travel if you qualify. If this interests you, please take a few minutes to read the major criteria listed under **Clinical Research**.

*If you think you may qualify for a study or have questions about participating in research. Please call a study specialist for more information at: (505) 923-3232.*

Feel free to pass this newsletter to a friend or relative who may be interested. The drug study information is updated often, since we are continually starting new studies and closing existing studies. Call and give your information to a study specialist for consideration for future studies. If there is nothing for you now, there may be one soon.

### Low Testosterone Replacement

This study is for men diagnosed with Low Testosterone and increased risk for cardiovascular disease. You may be eligible to participate if you:

- Are 45 to 80 years old
- Currently not being treated with testosterone in the last 6 months.

*Abbvie M16-100*

### Male Osteoporosis Study

This is a study for male patients not currently being treated for their Osteoporosis or Osteopenia. You may qualify if:

- You are between the age of 40 to 85
- No kidney stones in the last 5 years

*Radius BA058-05-019*

### Female Osteoporosis Study

This is a study for female patients not currently being treated for their Osteoporosis or Osteopenia. You may qualify if:

- You are between the age of 50 to 85
- No kidney stones in the last 5 years

*Radius BA058-05-021*

### Sarcopenia

This is a study for male and female patients who suffer from age-related Sarcopenia. You may qualify if:

- You are greater than or equal to 65
- Report loss of function over the last 6- 12 months.

*BIO101-CL03*





## Nurse's Nook by Sarah

### Trabecular bone score (TBS)

I am asked many questions during the day. The following pertains to TBS:

**What is TBS?** It is a trabecular bone score that gives us a better idea of the quality and strength of your bones. It is measured with special software that analyzes data from your bone density test.

**Why would I need this?** Because TBS tells us about the quality of your bones. It can impact your treatment. For example, if TBS is high, then your fracture risk may be lower than we thought. If your TBS is low, then your fracture risk may be higher than we thought. We can make better decisions about your treatment if we have more information.

**Should TBS be repeated?** Sometimes. A decrease in TBS may mean a poor response to treatment. An increase in TBS with a bone-building medication may mean your bone structure is improving.

**Why doesn't insurance pay for this test?** TBS is still relatively new, and we are the only facility in Albuquerque to use it.

TBS is a new measurement technique. We are hopeful that the knowledge gained by TBS will help us optimize your care. Our goal is to provide you with expert, individualized care.

## Osteoporosis Foundation of New Mexico (OFNM)

### Educational Presentations

Coronado Villa Resort Lifestyle  
Retirement Community  
6900 San Vicente Ave. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

(This is two streets north of San Antonio west from Louisiana)

RSVP to 505-857-3956

### 2019 Meetings (1:30-3:00 PM)

Thursday, August 8, 2019  
George Frasier  
*"Osteoporosis Do's & Don'ts"*

Thursday, November 7, 2019  
Barbara Goldberg, RN  
*Feldenkrais "Awareness of Movement"*

These meetings are open to the public. It is a great opportunity to talk to osteoporosis experts for as long as you want. There is limited space, so please sign up by calling 857-3956 in order to attend. A \$1 contribution is requested in order to cover the cost of educational material. You may donate more if you wish.

Directions to facility:  
From San Antonio, go north on Louisiana. Turn west on the second street. Coronado Villa is behind Grace Church.



If you enjoyed this newsletter and would like to be placed on an electronic mailing list, email [ybrusuelas@nmbonecare.com](mailto:ybrusuelas@nmbonecare.com).

**Ask Dr. Lewiecki about . . . OSTEOPOROSIS**

**Dear Dr. Lewiecki – I just read a news release that there is a new osteoporosis treatment. Is this something that could help me? My new doctor tells me I’m “complicated.” I broke my hip about 10 years ago and was then treated with Forteo for about 2 years. I have had no treatment since that time. My most recent bone density test showed a very low T-score. On top of that, I was just diagnosed with a new compression fracture in my spine. I am 82 years old. What should I do?**

**Angela R., Los Alamos, NM.**

Dear Angela – Yours is a very timely letter. The new medication is EVENITY, a bone-building drug that works in a different way than Forteo (see front page of this newsletter). It is intended for use in postmenopausal women with osteoporosis who are at high risk for fracture. That certainly describes you!

Looking back on your care in the past, it is unfortunate that you had no treatment after Forteo. Remember that osteoporosis is a lifelong

disease that requires lifelong attention. There is no temporary solution and no “cure,” at least not yet. After finishing Forteo, or any other bone-building drug, it is essential that you follow it up with another medication. If you don’t, you will rapidly lose the benefits of the Forteo.

For you, this is what I suggest at this point . . . You need a thorough evaluation for all things that might contribute to your risk of breaking bones. That includes laboratory tests, an up-to-date bone density test, and assessment of your balance and muscle strength. Any abnormalities in these tests should be addressed. If your risk of falling is high, it may help to see a physical therapist. Finally, it looks like you need to be on a medication to strengthen your bones. You may be a candidate for treatment with EVENITY, but the decision to treat should be individualized according to the balance of expected benefits and possible risks. Talk it over with your doctor to learn more.

*Mike Lewiecki*

From the editor: If you have a question for Dr. Lewiecki, please send it by mail to the address on the front page of this newsletter, drop off at the office, or email to Sarah Erb at [serb@nmbonecare.com](mailto:serb@nmbonecare.com). It is not possible to respond to all questions submitted. Those that are of general interest will be considered for publication.

**MEET THE BONE TEAM**

At New Mexico Clinical Research & Osteoporosis Center we are dedicated to providing the highest quality skeletal health care. Our aim is to prevent fractures (broken bones), avoid deformities of bones, and optimize quality of life. This requires a multidisciplinary team approach. Our team is directed by **Dr. Lewiecki** who offers consultations for patients with osteoporosis and other bone diseases, such as osteomalacia, osteogenesis imperfecta, hypophosphatemia, Paget’s disease of bone, hypophosphatasia, and fibrous dysplasia. **Dr. Rudolph** also has expertise in bone diseases and provides similar services. They are assisted by **Sarah Erb**, an osteoporosis nurse practitioner, who helps with consultations, injectable osteoporosis medications, and interpretation of bone density tests. **Danny Widholm** is the lead technologist for bone density testing. He works with **Jacquelyn Garcia**, our newest technologist. **Monica Tanny** is our osteoporosis treatment coordinator. Many others in the office participate in patient education and interfacing with insurance companies and advocating for you to get the care you need.



**Support osteoporosis education in New Mexico. Help to reduce the burden of osteoporotic fractures. Osteoporosis Foundation of New Mexico is a local non-profit 501(c)(3) foundation. Consider a tax-deductible donation or bequest. Donations may be mailed to Osteoporosis Foundation of New Mexico at 300 Oak St NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. For more information, go [www.ofnm.org](http://www.ofnm.org) or call 505.857.3956.**