



July 2015

Surgery Shown Useful for Treating Dead Jaw Bone due to Drugs used for Osteoporosis and Cancer

Drugs used to manage osteoporosis in women and excess blood calcium in certain forms of metastatic cancer have been shown to cause jawbone to die (osteonecrosis) in a significant number of people. Surgery to treat this condition (medication-related osteonecrosis of the jaws {MRONJ}) has proved to be a successful treatment for some cases.

A six-year study conducted from 2006 to 2012 evaluated MRONJ patients who underwent surgery to correct the condition. The results of the study appear in the July issue of the *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*. “Surgical Therapy for Bisphosphonate-Related Osteonecrosis of the Jaw: Six-Year Experience of a Single Institution,” reports that complete healing was observed in 87% of the affected sites, with partial improvement observed in another 6%, for a 93.5% clinical benefit rate.

MRONJ is a serious condition that adversely affects an individual’s quality of life. Oral and maxillofacial surgeons first noticed the condition more than 10 years ago, when a number of patients taking bisphosphonate and antiangiogenic medications presented with the exposed jaw bone and other symptoms that characterize MRONJ.

Treating the condition may be difficult, and no single treatment is appropriate for every case. The American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons recommends that patients receiving or about to begin treatment with intravenous bisphosphonates or antiangiogenic drugs for cancer, and those who are taking the drugs orally for osteoporosis see their dental professional for a thorough examination before starting treatment.

Read the complete study findings at *J Oral Maxillofac Surg*, 73:1288-1295, 2015

The Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery is published monthly by the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons to present to the dental and medical communities comprehensive coverage of new techniques, important developments and innovative ideas in oral and maxillofacial surgery. Practice-applicable articles help develop the methods used to handle dentoalveolar surgery, facial injuries and deformities, TMJ disorders, oral cancer, jaw reconstruction, anesthesia and analgesia. The journal also includes specifics on new instruments and diagnostic equipment and modern therapeutic drugs and devices.