

Can patients with a history of radiation therapy use FORTEO® (teriparatide injection)?

Please refer to the citations provided at the end of the document for a more in-depth review of radiation and the risk of osteosarcoma.

INTRODUCTION

Radiation-induced osteosarcoma is a rare but well-recognized complication in human radiotherapy patients that was first reported in patients after treatment with ionizing radiation in the 1920s.¹

The skeletal effects from irradiation depend on a number of variables, including the

- character of the radiation
- dose rate and accumulated dose
- time of exposure
- radiation exposure (acute or continuous), and
- character of the irradiated tissues.¹

In most radiotherapy protocols, high doses of therapeutic radiation are directed at the tumor tissue. Other tissues, including the skeleton and likely the entire body, can be exposed to comparatively low doses of unwanted radiation via scattering of radiation within the body and low level leakage from the treatment apparatus.²

Development of second malignant neoplasms (SMNs), including osteosarcoma, in tissues that are located in-field (in the path of the therapeutic beam) and out-of-field (outside the path of the therapeutic beam but affected by scatter) can occur years or decades after initial treatment.^{1,2}

While advances in radiobiology have led to the availability of high-energy beams of photons, protons, and carbon ions that may better spare normal tissues from acute radiation toxicity, these more recent therapies have also resulted in reports of SMNs, including osteosarcoma.²⁻⁵

According to the US prescribing information, use of teriparatide should be avoided in patients with increased risk of osteosarcoma, including those who have had prior external beam or implant radiation therapy involving the skeleton.⁶

Eli Lilly and Company (Lilly) provides the following information to clarify “prior radiation therapy involving the skeleton” and relevant citations are included for reference.

PRIOR RADIATION THERAPY WHERE TERIPARATIDE SHOULD NOT BE USED

Teriparatide should not be used if patient had exposure to

- therapeutic external beam radiation, including
 - radiation therapy for a soft tissue malignancy, such as breast cancer (such patients likely have experienced radiation affecting the skeleton around the breast [the sternum or ribs])^{7,8}
- any type of radiation implanted into the body, including

- brachytherapy
- interstitial radiation
- intracavitary radiation,^{7,9} or
- stereotactic radiation to the brain or other areas of the body, including
 - stereotactic radiosurgery
 - fractionated stereotactic radiotherapy
 - stereotactic body radiation therapy
 - Gamma Knife®
 - X-Knife®
 - CyberKnife®
 - Clinac®.^{7,10}

Case reports of SMNs, including osteosarcoma, have been reported in patients receiving these therapies.³⁻⁵

PRIOR RADIATION THERAPY WHERE TERIPARATIDE MAY BE CONSIDERED

Teriparatide use may be considered in patients who had

- radioactive iodine therapy
- low doses of nonpenetrative radiation (Grenz radiation) used for treatment of skin conditions
- diagnostic radiation, including
 - radiographs
 - computed tomography (CT) scans
 - radionuclide scans, or
- non-radioactive forms of radiation, including
 - ultraviolet radiation
 - phototherapy.⁷

INFORMATION ON THE USE OF RADIATION DURING OR AFTER TERIPARATIDE THERAPY

If a patient is receiving teriparatide and develops a need for radiation therapy, Lilly advises that the teriparatide treatment be discontinued immediately or prior to radiation therapy.

There are no studies to describe the effect of teriparatide exposure on subsequent risk of osteosarcoma in patients that have radiation therapy after teriparatide exposure.

Case Series on Teriparatide Use in Patients With a History of Radiation Therapy

Cheung et al identified patients treated with teriparatide at their institution between January 2010 and 2021 despite having a history of radiotherapy. Patients who had received radiation

therapy after completion of teriparatide treatment were excluded. The aim of the analysis was to explore the practice regarding radiotherapy and teriparatide use at the institution.¹¹

Among the 6 patients (4 female, 2 male) included in the final case series,

- mean age at the time of starting teriparatide was 65 (range 38-84) years
- all had severe and complex osteoporosis (risk factors for osteoporosis: former smokers, 2; history of glucocorticoid use, 4; family history of osteoporosis, 3; premature menopause, 2; high fall risk, 3)
- 5 had a history of multiple fragility fractures (≥ 2), and
- 4 had tried one or more types of bisphosphonates, while 2 were treatment-naïve.¹¹

The radiotherapy regimens and indications for the same included

- 3060 cGy at the lumbar spine for B-cell lymphoma
- 750 cGy at the right hip as prophylaxis for hip heterotopic ossification surgery
- whole-body irradiation of unknown dose for acute lymphoid leukemia (ALL) allogeneic transplant
- 7920 cGy at the prostate bed and pelvis for prostate cancer
- 4990 cGy at the left breast for ductal carcinoma in situ of the breast, and
- 5500 cGy at the right shin for squamous cell carcinoma of the skin.¹¹

Among the 3 patients who had received radiotherapy prior to teriparatide commencement,

- in 2 cases, teriparatide had been commenced and was administered for 2 years as its potential benefits were believed to outweigh the potential osteosarcoma risk, and
- in 1 case, it was not known whether the osteosarcoma risk had been discussed between the endocrinologist and patient before starting treatment, but teriparatide was stopped after 3 months because of concerns regarding the patient's prior radiation history.¹¹

The time duration between completion of radiotherapy and commencement of teriparatide was 5 and 15 months in the first 2 cases and 12 years in the third case.¹¹

The remaining 3 patients started radiotherapy during the course of teriparatide treatment. Two of them received teriparatide throughout their radiotherapy as their endocrinologist was not aware of the radiotherapy, whereas in 1 case, teriparatide was stopped early upon the endocrinologist's recommendation because of the increased risk of osteosarcoma.¹¹

The median duration of follow-up was

- 3.8 (range, 2.6-4.7) years after commencement of teriparatide, and
- 3.6 (range, 1.8-4.9) years after the last radiotherapy treatment.¹¹

No significant adverse events or cases of osteosarcoma were reported during the follow-up period. Patients completing 2 years of teriparatide experienced increases in bone mineral density and did not incur any further fragility fractures during the follow-up.¹¹

The findings of this study must be interpreted with caution. Although the incidence of second cancers after radiotherapy alone tends to increase with time, it is unclear how long it typically takes for osteosarcoma to develop after combination radiotherapy/teriparatide. Hence, no definitive conclusions can be derived regarding the safety of teriparatide use during/after radiotherapy from this study. In addition, the follow-up duration was too short to derive any meaningful estimates of fracture incidence in this small cohort. Finally, patients with bone metastases and bone marrow malignancies are a unique population, and this study did not investigate the risks and considerations associated with this subset of patients.¹¹

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ENCLOSED PRESCRIBING INFORMATION

[FORTEO® \(teriparatide injection\), Lilly](#)

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