Letter to the Editor

What happens to hip fracture patients in placebo-controlled trials for osteoporosis?

Hip fracture patients are removed from the trials and treated by their own private doctors, hopefully also for osteoporosis. One will never see any hip fracture mortality figures in any placebo controlled osteoporosis trial.1–4

The average fracture risk reduction resulting from the use of all osteoporosis drugs is in the region of 50%. Hip fractures are associated with an overall 12–20% mortality reduction, from expected survival.7,8 The number of hip fracture patients in the placebo group would be double compared to that in the treatment group, and hence the mortality rate would also be expected to be higher.

Placebo-controlled trials in osteoporosis are unethical, and new drugs should be compared to existing drugs.9

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References