A number of drugs can have "side effects" on bone metabolism and formation, causing bone atrophy, impaired mineralisation, as well as osteonecrosis. In both clinical and general practitioner settings, these forms of bone damage have been hitherto considered as adverse drug side effects and have received insufficient attention; moreover, they have not been the subject of patient information. Preventive measures are not instigated prior to initiation of medication and even after onset of bone damage, therapeutic strategies are poorly implemented. Even fracture healing with its complex, staged course can be both positively and negatively influenced by a number of drugs and these effects require monitoring. Recommendations regarding practical screening and therapy of drug-induced osteopathies are presented.