

Care Partner Role

Care partners play an important role in a patient’s journey during ALK inhibitor treatment, not only through emotional support. They also play a crucial role in detecting side effects.

Here are some observational cues to record:



- ✓ Changes in conversation, such as repetition and word-finding
- ✓ Increased confusion about routine tasks
- ✓ New sleep or appetite changes
- ✓ Mood or behavioural shifts
- ✓ Falls or near-falls

When making these observations, it is helpful to record any changes you observe in a journal and include concrete examples. For instance, “she forgot to turn off the stove yesterday” versus “she’s more forgetful”.

When to Seek Help Right Away

Call the doctor right away if you or the patient notice any of the following symptoms during ALK inhibitor treatment:



- ✓ Blurred vision
- ✓ Confusion
- ✓ Constipation that lasts more than 3 days
- ✓ Diarrhoea that lasts more than 1 day
- ✓ Black or bloody bowel movements
- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Chills
- ✓ Intense fatigue
- ✓ Pounding or rapidly beating heart
- ✓ Vomiting and not being able to keep fluids down
- ✓ Shortness of breath
- ✓ Rash
- ✓ Worsened skin condition
- ✓ Progressive weakness
- ✓ Numbness
- ✓ Tingling
- ✓ Dizziness
- ✓ Severe depression or anxiety

Working With the Care Team

Here are some helpful tips when working with the care team to assist the patient’s journey:



- ✓ Inform the care team that you are the caregiver or care partner
- ✓ Advocate for the patient, i.e., voice any concerns or opinions when needed to help the patient
- ✓ Ask questions either on behalf of the patient or for yourself
- ✓ Keep track of appointments or treatment plans
- ✓ Take notes
- ✓ Get to know the care team, including getting any emergency contacts

Self-care Tips for the Care Partner

Being a caregiver can be challenging. While you want to support the patient, it is also crucial that you care for yourself too. Here are some helpful tips to navigate this journey of caregiving:



- ✓ Get support either through counselling or joining a support group
- ✓ Focusing on the present versus the future
- ✓ Try to maintain as much of a “normal” routine as possible.
- ✓ Find stress relievers, e.g., walking, meditation, exercise, journaling, music, etc.