



ALK Positive - Crizotinib (Xalkori) Help Document

(Note: The information within this document does not constitute medical advice. The information compiled here is provided by members of ALK Positive to assist in the management of side effects for this medication based upon real world experiences that have worked for them.)

Last Updated: 03/02/2018

NOTE TO PATIENTS TAKING THIS DRUG: Crizotinib is known to have little, if any, penetration of the Blood Brain Barrier (BBB), which may leave your Central Nervous System (CNS) vulnerable to metastasis. It is suggested that while taking this drug the patient receives regular brain MRI's to watch for any changes. Regular brain MRI's would be at three (3) to six (6) months intervals. Some physicians may resist this frequency of MRI's of the brain, but it is better to catch any brain metastasis while it is very small, before you become symptomatic. Catching brain metastasis' early on may allow the next ALK inhibitor to resolve small brain metastasis without requiring radiotherapy to the brain. Please refer to the ALK-Positive_Brain_MRI.pdf file in the files section of the support group or on the main website.

Adverse Reactions	Prevention/Treatment
Diarrhea	Over the counter medication such as Imodium is helpful. Many patients report diarrhea is worse with the morning dose, stay near a bathroom. Keep a list of foods eaten as some foods can contribute to making diarrhea worse.
Nausea/Vomiting	Take the medication 30 minutes after food. Some patients find eating something starchy is best, others find it necessary to have protein. Drink plenty of water and stay upright for the subsequent 60 minutes. If the nausea persists, a doctor may prescribe anti-nausea medication such as Zofran, Reglan, Dronabinol, Marinol, Compazine, Sancuso Patch. Taking medication with Ginger tea, cookies, or soda is helpful.
Heartburn/Esophageal/Reflux	Take the medication with food. If the Xalkori medication gets stuck in the esophagus, it can cause an extreme and painful burning sensation. To avoid, stay upright (do not lie down) for at least an hour after taking the



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	<p>pill. Also, take the pill with some food, swallow it with a generous amount of liquid, and perhaps also eat a little something after swallowing the pill, just to ensure it has gone all the way down.</p>
Edema	<p>Edema is common especially in feet and legs. Stay hydrated, avoid salt or lower intake, and elevate feet when seated. Compressions socks and lymph/edema wraps and massages were helpful for some.</p>
Vision Issues (Blurred vision, Double vision, Sensitivity to Light)	<p>This is often more pronounced at night, when going from darkness into light. Many patients report that this side effect lessened considerably after the first month or two on the drug.</p>
Elevated Liver Enzymes	<p>Some patients whose liver values refused to come down, had to transition to another treatment. The medication can be stopped for 1-2 weeks and then resumed at a reduced dose.* Reduce or eliminate alcohol consumption to reduce strain on liver. Many patients note they lowered liver enzymes by eating beets; Silennium (eat 4 Brazilian nuts); taking Milk Thistle; limit caffeine and drink lemon water or jiaogulan tea.</p>
Low Blood Pressure/Heart Rate	<p>This medication is known to reduce blood pressure and heart rate, make sure that you are not taking additional medications that could lower the heart rate and blood pressure. Monitor and record blood</p>



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	pressure/heart rate and do rest after medication if you experience this symptom to avoid dizziness/fainting.
Dizziness/Fainting	Dizziness and feeling faint can be related to the reduced heart rate and lower blood pressure. Many note this symptom happening shortly after taking medication, if you have this symptom is best to lie down for a bit and let the feeling pass and do not drive.
Upper Respiratory Infection/Pneumonitis	Can be a side effect of radiation and/or medication. Treated with steroids and depending on severity can mean having to stop medication and or change medication.
Wheezing/SOB	Report to physician can be side effect of medication, or pleural effusion, pneumonitis, or blood clots in lungs.
Fatigue	Get more sleep/rest per day; drink lots of water/stay hydrated; Caffeine (tea,coffee)
Taste Changes	Eating bland foods helped make it less noticeable and it eventually got better after a few months.



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Appetite/Weight	Patients report decreased appetite with this medication and can also experience weight loss. Patients also report weight gain with no significant changes in activity or diet. Weight gain can be a result of hormonal changes
Numbness/Tingling	Stay hydrated, diarrhea can lower electrolytes, potassium, and magnesium that can cause numbness, tingling and involuntary movements.
Rash	Calamine lotion applied twice daily. Avoid sun exposure, use sunscreen. Aquaphor may be helpful and provide relief.
Lowering Testosterone Levels/Hormone Changes	Low testosterone in men can affect mood, energy, weight and sleep. Male patients can be evaluated for a prescription for a testosterone replacement medication. <i>Menstrual Cycle changes (for women)</i> → Some female patients have experienced irregularities with their menstrual cycles while on Xalkori.
Sensitivity to Alcohol	Avoid alcohol