

# Taking Care

## A Guide For Caregivers

### Being the face of support

As a caregiver for someone living with advanced breast cancer, your role is absolutely vital. There may be no cure for the disease, but with your help, your loved one may find the comfort and support they need.

A diagnosis of advanced breast cancer can create a new routine for both you and your loved one. And while a lot may have changed, a lot hasn't. That's why we've developed this guide to help you navigate your and your loved one's new normal and to help you learn more about their IBRANCE® (palbociclib) treatment. It may also be a useful reference for information about:

- Self-care
- Tips about caring for your loved one
- Support resources available to you both

### What Is IBRANCE®?

IBRANCE (palbociclib) is a prescription medicine used to treat a certain type of breast cancer (hormone receptor positive (HR+), human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2)-negative advanced breast cancer) which may have come back or has spread to other parts of the body. It is given together with either an aromatase inhibitor or fulvestrant.



**IBRANCE®**  
palbociclib

For more information on IBRANCE visit [www.IBRANCE.co.nz](http://www.IBRANCE.co.nz) or [medsafe.govt.nz](http://medsafe.govt.nz) for the IBRANCE Consumer Medicine Information.

# Caring For Yourself

While providing your loved one with support is vital, it's just as important to take care of yourself. We've put together the following tips to help you stay on top of the stress and fatigue that can come with helping your loved one, following an advanced breast cancer diagnosis.

## Set realistic expectations for yourself

Advanced breast cancer can be daunting to face, for patients and caregivers alike. Even when you're doing everything you can, it can be frustrating to feel like you're coming up short. Focus on what you can accomplish to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

## Maintain your hobbies

Preserving your personal life may give you an outlet for stress and help you relax so that you can be an effective caregiver. Make time for the things you want to do, and regularly plan activities you enjoy.

## Consider joining a support group

If you ever feel overwhelmed, remember that you're not alone. Many groups exist (in person and online) to help caregivers find the support they need.

## Keep your friends close

Caregiving can be a consuming job. Your friends can provide a welcome distraction and offer help if you need it. Just as you're supporting someone, it's important not to abandon your own support system.

## Stay ahead of stress

If you're feeling tired or stressed, finding ways to relax, like yoga, meditation, or even taking a nap, can have a profound effect on your ability to give care effectively.

## Accept help if it's offered

When people offer a helping hand, there's no sense in turning it down. Often, people are happy to help out, but don't know where to start. Having a list of chores handy can make it easy to give friends and family members something meaningful to do.





## Giving Care

Giving your loved one the support they need starts with understanding what they want. Explore some tips below on communicating effectively and some simple things you can do that may make a difference to them and you.

### Keep the lines of communication open

Advanced breast cancer may leave your loved one feeling isolated. Make sure they know that you're there for them, and that they should feel comfortable sharing honestly with you. If you aren't sure about how they are feeling or what they need, ask.

### Listen to their needs

Always listen carefully and ask if it is okay to offer advice. Remember your loved one is the person facing advanced breast cancer, so it's important to respect their decisions regarding treatment and how they manage the disease.

### Give them emotional space

Your loved one will have good days and bad, and sometimes a bit of time alone may be what they need most.

### Be honest

Your feelings are important too. Sharing how you feel can help ensure that negative emotions don't get bottled up, but don't overwhelm your loved one with these feelings. If you're feeling stressed, make sure you take some time to calm down before discussing any personal concerns.

### Little things can go a long way

Just taking on a simple chore like cooking, cleaning, or filling out medical paperwork can be a big help, especially if your loved one is having a rough day.

### Establish a relationship with your loved one's healthcare team

Get to know your loved one's healthcare team and how to reach them. Ask your loved one if they'd like you to join them at their appointments. You may have questions that the healthcare team can answer, and it can be helpful to have someone take notes.

### Try different ways of communicating

You may find that leaving notes and showing physical affection can be good ways to communicate.

# Understanding IBRANCE®

To help your loved one better understand their IBRANCE treatment plan and how to take it, it's important that they take note of the following:

- ✓ They should always take their IBRANCE dosage exactly as their healthcare team prescribes.
- ✓ IBRANCE tablets can be taken with or without food.
- ✓ They should avoid grapefruit, grapefruit juice, and grapefruit products while on IBRANCE therapy. Grapefruit may increase the amount of IBRANCE in your loved one's blood.
- ✓ They should swallow their IBRANCE dose whole with a glass of water. Your loved one should not chew, crush or split their IBRANCE before swallowing them. They should not take any IBRANCE pills that are broken, cracked, or that look damaged.
- ✓ They should try to take IBRANCE at approximately the same time each day.
- ✓ They should not change their dose or stop taking IBRANCE unless their healthcare team tells them. Know that if they miss a day's dose or vomit after taking a dose of IBRANCE, your loved one should not take an extra dose. They should just take their next dose at their regular time.
- ✓ If your loved one takes too much IBRANCE, they should immediately call their doctor right away or call the poisons information centre (0800 POISON or 0800 764 766) for advice or go to Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital.
- ✓ Before your loved one starts taking IBRANCE, they should read through the IBRANCE patient booklet or visit [www.IBRANCE.co.nz](http://www.IBRANCE.co.nz)



# Your Loved One's Treatment Cycle

Your loved one will need to take their IBRANCE orally once a day over a 4-week cycle in combination with either an aromatase inhibitor or with a drug called fulvestrant.

## If your loved one is on IBRANCE and an aromatase inhibitor

IBRANCE and an aromatase inhibitor (for example letrozole) are taken orally in a 4-week cycle as a **once daily** dose. For the first 3 weeks (21 days), your loved one will take one IBRANCE pill and one aromatase inhibitor pill, once a day. Then for the last week (7 days), they will not take their IBRANCE pill, just their aromatase inhibitor pill. At the end of 4 weeks, the cycle will start over again.

## If your loved one is on IBRANCE and fulvestrant

For the first 3 weeks (21 days), your loved one will take one IBRANCE pill, once a day. Then for the last week (7 days), they won't take IBRANCE. At the end of 4 weeks, the cycle will start over again.

Your loved one will also be required to receive 3 doses of fulvestrant (an intramuscular injection) during their first month of treatment. Your loved one's healthcare team will give them one dose on days 1, 15 and 29 of

the first month and then a single dose once a month thereafter.

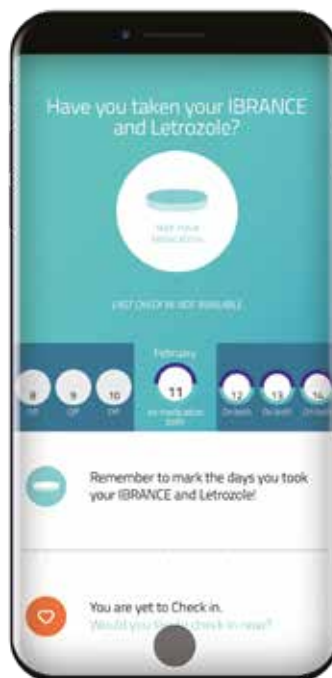
Their healthcare team will monitor their therapy throughout and they will be required to have blood tests during this time. It is important that your loved one has these blood tests on time, which is something that you can help ensure your loved one remembers to do.

## Staying on track

It's very important for your loved one to take their medicine exactly as prescribed. You can help by ensuring your loved one has downloaded the CAREMATE mBC app. Features of the CAREMATE mBC app include:

- Reminders to your loved one on when to take their medication
- A health diary for your loved one to fill out
- Helping your loved one with managing possible side effects

It also allows your loved one to view or log their information and even share it with their doctor.



**IBRANCE® (palbociclib 75 mg, 100 mg and 125 mg) Capsules and Tablets**

IBRANCE (palbociclib) is a funded prescription medicine used to treat HR+, HER2- advanced breast cancer taken in combination with an aromatase inhibitor or fulvestrant. IBRANCE has risks and benefits. Do not take IBRANCE if you are allergic to palbociclib or any of the other ingredients in IBRANCE capsules or IBRANCE tablets. Caution is needed if you are premenopausal or perimenopausal, have or have had abnormal blood test results, respiratory infections or problems with your lungs, problems with your liver or kidneys, are lactose intolerant, are pregnant or planning to become pregnant or are breastfeeding. Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines. Common side effects include infection, abnormal blood test results, tiredness, feeling sick or vomiting, diarrhoea, sore mouth, lips or tongue, hair loss, loss of appetite, nose bleed, skin rash, change in sense of taste, blurred vision, increased tearing or dry eyes, shortness of breath, bleeding or bruising more easily than usual. If symptoms continue or you have side effects, see your doctor, pharmacist or healthcare professional. Ask your doctor if IBRANCE is right for you. Use strictly as directed. Contains 75 mg, 100 mg or 125 mg of palbociclib. IBRANCE is funded. A pharmacy charge and normal doctor's fees apply for all prescriptions. Further information on IBRANCE is available from Medsafe [www.medsafe.govt.nz](http://www.medsafe.govt.nz) or Pfizer New Zealand Limited, Auckland, [www.pfizer.co.nz](http://www.pfizer.co.nz) Ph. 0800 736 363. V10721

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For more information, visit [www.IBRANCE.co.nz](http://www.IBRANCE.co.nz).

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