

Medicare Part D Medication Coverage Fact Sheet

In 2017, Medicare Part D plans have provided prescription drug benefits to over 42 million Medicare beneficiaries who are 65 years or older, are under age 65 with disabilities, or have end-stage renal disease.¹ Medications must meet certain requirements and be prescribed for a medically-accepted indication to be considered a covered Part D drug. To ensure appropriate prescribing, minimize interruptions in therapy, and improve medication accessibility, please note the following:

What is a Part D Drug?³

- A drug that may be dispensed only with a prescription
- A biological product
- Insulin and medical supplies associated with delivery of insulin
- Vaccines and their administration (influenza vaccines and pneumococcal vaccines are covered under Part B)

Part D drugs on formulary can have the following statuses:

- Prior Authorization (PA): a request for approval to prevent misuse or abuse of certain drugs
- Step Therapy: a requirement for preferred cost-effective alternatives to be tried and failed first
- Quantity Limit: a limit on the amount of drug covered over a period of time based on safety and cost

What is a medically-accepted indication?³

- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval **or**
- Use supported by one or more of the following recognized compendia
 - American Hospital Formulary Service Drug Information
 - DRUGDEX® Information System
 - National Comprehensive Cancer Network Drugs and Biologics

Part D drug formularies are generally required to include “all or substantially all drugs” in six protected categories: immunosuppressant, antidepressant, antipsychotic, anticonvulsant, antiretroviral, and antineoplastic.³

What drugs are excluded from Medicare Part D coverage?⁴

- Medications prescribed for:
 - Anorexia, weight loss or weight gain (even if used for morbid obesity)
 - Fertility
 - Hair growth or cosmetic purposes
 - Symptomatic relief of cough and colds
 - Prescription vitamins and mineral products
- Drugs used to treat sexual or erectile dysfunction
- Non-prescription (OTC) drugs
- Drugs covered by Medicare Parts A or B

References

1. Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit Fact Sheet. Kaiser Family Foundation, October 2017.
2. Medicare Program. Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services. Updated July 25, 2014. Available at: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/MedicareGenInfo/index.html>. Accessed July 14, 2017.
3. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Medicare Prescription Drug Manual, Chapter 6 (revised January 15, 2016).
4. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Medicare Prescription Drug Manual, Chapter 6- Appendix B (revised January 15, 2016)

Medi-Cal Educational Bulletins are available through the CalOptima website at www.caloptima.org: Providers-Medi-Cal Pharmacy Resources

The CalOptima Approved Drug List is available on our website: www.caloptima.org
and for PDA download at www.epocrates.com