Inhaled Beta Agonists

Application of pharmacy policy is determined by benefits and contracts. Benefits may vary based on product line, group, or contract. Some medications may be subject to precertification, age, gender or quantity restrictions. Individual member benefits must be verified.

This pharmacy policy document describes the status of pharmaceutical information and/or technology at the time the document was developed. Since that time, new information relating to drug efficacy, interactions, contraindications, dosage, administration routes, safety, or FDA approval may have changed. This Pharmacy Policy will be regularly updated as scientific and medical literature becomes available. This information may include new FDA-approved indications, withdrawals, or other FDA alerts. This type of information is relevant not only when considering whether this policy should be updated, but also when applying it to current requests for coverage.

Members are advised to use participating pharmacies in order to receive the highest level of benefits.

**Intent:**
The intent of this policy is to communicate the medical necessity criteria for Albuterol (Proventil HFA®/Ventolin HFA®) and Levalbuterol (Xopenex HFA®) as provided under the member's pharmacy benefit.

**Description:**
Albuterol and levalbuterol are selective beta-2-adrenergic agonists. The pharmacologic effects of beta adrenergic agonists is at least in part attributable to stimulation through beta-adrenergic receptors of intracellular adenyl cyclase, the enzyme that catalyzes the conversion of adenosine triphosphate to cyclic-3',5'-adenosine monophosphate (cyclic AMP). Increased cyclic AMP levels are associated with relaxation of bronchial smooth muscle and inhibition of release of mediators from mast cells in the airway.

Albuterol (Proventil HFA®/Ventolin HFA®) is indicated for the treatment or prevention of bronchospasm with reversible obstructive airway disease and prevention of exercise-induced bronchospasm in adults and children 4 years of age and older.

Levalbuterol (Xopenex HFA®) are indicated for the treatment and prevention of bronchospasm in adults and children 6 years of age and older with reversible obstructive airway disease.

**Policy:**
Proventil HFA®/Ventolin HFA® and Xopenex HFA® are approved when there is documentation of inadequate response or inability to tolerate ProAir.

**Black Box Warning:**
None
Guidelines:
Refer to the specific manufacturer's prescribing information for administration and dosage details and any applicable Black Box warnings.

BENEFIT APPLICATION

Subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable benefit contract, the applicable drug(s) identified in this policy is (are) covered under the pharmacy benefits of the Company's products when the medical necessity criteria listed in this pharmacy policy are met. Any services that are experimental/investigational or cosmetic are benefit contract exclusions for all products of the Company.

References:


Applicable Drugs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Name</th>
<th>Generic Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proventil</td>
<td>Albuterol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ventolin</td>
<td>Albuterol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xopenex</td>
<td>Levalbuterol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cross References:

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