Plus Drug Formulary

November 2022

Blue Shield of California

This formulary corresponds with the following plans:
Local Access+ HMO®, EPO

This formulary was last updated on 11/17/2022 . This formulary is subject to change and all previous versions of the formulary no longer apply. For the most current information about the *Plus Drug Formulary,* visit www.blueshieldca.com/pharmacy.

You can find information about specific prescription drug benefits and drug benefit exclusions in the Blue Shield *Summary of Benefits* and *Evidence of Coverage.* For plan and coverage documents, visit https://www.blueshieldca.com/bsca/bsc/wcm/connect/employer/employer_contents_en/policies. For additional information about your plan, call the customer service number on your Blue Shield member ID card.

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Informational Section

The *Blue Shield Plus Drug Formulary* is a list of medications that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and are selected based on safety, effectiveness, and cost. This list of generic and brand drugs is covered by your health insurance policy under the prescription drug benefit of the policy.

Definitions

The following words and definitions will be used throughout the formulary drug list.

Term
"**Brand name drug**" is a drug that is marketed under a proprietary, trademark protected name. The brand name drug shall be listed in all CAPITAL letters.
"**Coinsurance**" is a percentage of the cost of a covered health care benefit that an enrollee pays after the enrollee has paid the deductible, if a deductible applies to the health care benefit, such as the prescription drug benefit.
"**Copayment**" is a fixed dollar amount that an enrollee pays for a covered health care benefit after the enrollee has paid the deductible, if a deductible applies to the health care benefit, such as the prescription drug benefit.
"**Deductible"** is the amount an enrollee pays for covered health care benefits before the enrollee's health plan begins payment for all or part of the cost of the health care benefit under the terms of the policy.
"**Drug Tier"** is a group of prescription drugs that corresponds to a specified cost sharing tier in the health plan's prescription drug coverage. The tier in which a prescription drug is placed determines the enrollee's portion of the cost for the drug.
"Enrollee" is a person enrolled in a health plan who is entitled to receive services from the plan. All references to enrollees in this formulary template shall also include subscriber as defined in this section below.
"**Exception request"** is a request for coverage of a prescription drug. If an enrollee, his or her designee, or prescribing health care provider submits an exception request for coverage of a prescription drug, the health plan must cover the prescription drug when the drug is determined to be medically necessary to treat the enrollee's condition.
"**Exigent circumstances"** are when an enrollee is suffering from a health condition that may seriously jeopardize the enrollee's life, health, or ability to regain maximum function, or when an enrollee is undergoing a current course of treatment using a non-formulary drug.

Term
"**Formulary"** is the complete list of drugs preferred for use and eligible for coverage under a health plan product, and includes all drugs covered under the outpatient prescription drug benefit of the health plan product. Formulary is also known as a prescription drug list.
"**Generic drug**" is the same drug as its brand name equivalent in dosage, safety, strength, how it is taken, quality, performance, and intended use. A generic drug is listed in ***bold and italicized lowercase letters***.
"**Non-formulary drug**" is a prescription drug that is not listed on the health plan's formulary.
"**Out-of-pocket costs**" are copayments, coinsurance, and the applicable deductible, plus all costs for health care services that are not covered by the health plan.
"**Prescribing provider**" is a health care provider authorized to write a prescription to treat a medical condition for a health plan enrollee.
"**Prescription**" is an oral, written, or electronic order by a prescribing provider for a specific enrollee that contains the name of the prescription drug, the quantity of the prescribed drug, the date of issue, the name and contact information of the prescribing provider, the signature of the prescribing provider if the prescription is in writing, and if requested by the enrollee, the medical condition or purpose for which the drug is being prescribed.
"**Prescription drug**" is a drug that is prescribed by the enrollee's prescribing provider and requires a prescription under applicable law.
"**Preventive Health Drugs**" are Affordable Care Act (ACA) preventive health drugs, including contraceptive drugs and devices, covered at no charge when specific criteria are met.* Preventive health drugs are determined based on evidence-based recommendations by the United States Preventive Services Task Force.
"**Prior authorization**" is a health plan's requirement that the enrollee or the enrollee's prescribing provider obtain the health plan's authorization for a prescription drug before the health plan will cover the drug. The health plan shall grant a prior authorization when it is medically necessary for the enrollee to obtain the drug.

* Does not apply to grandfathered plans, plans purchased on or before March 23, 2010.

Term
"**Step therapy"** is a process specifying the sequence in which different prescription drugs for a given medical condition and medically appropriate for a particular patient are prescribed. The health plan may require the enrollee to try one or more drugs to treat the enrollee's medical condition before the health plan will cover a particular drug for the condition pursuant to a step therapy request. If the enrollee's prescribing provider submits a request for step therapy exception, the health plans shall make exceptions to step therapy when the criteria is met.
"Subscriber" means the person who is responsible for payment to a plan or whose employment or other status, except for family dependency, is the basis for eligibility for membership in the plan.

How do I find a drug on this list?

Each drug is listed alphabetically under the column titled "Prescription Drug Name" by its brand or generic name under the therapeutic category and class to which it belongs. This formulary uses the U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP) classification system.

You can search this list using the brand or generic name of the drug by:

- Searching for the category or class to which the drug belongs and searching for the name of the drug in alphabetical order or
- Searching the Alphabetical Index of Drugs by the name of the drug.

Listing a drug on the formulary does not guarantee that it will be prescribed by your doctor or prescriber.

How do I know if the drug listed is a brand or generic drug?

- A generic name for a brand name drug is listed after the brand name of the drug in all ***lowercase bold italics***
    - If a generic equivalent for a brand name drug is both available and covered, the generic drug will be listed separately from the brand name drug in all ***lowercase bold italics***
    - When a generic drug is marketed with a brand name, the brand name will be listed after the generic name in parentheses in all CAPITALS.
- A brand name drug is listed in all CAPITALS followed by the generic name

in parentheses in ***lowercase bold italics***.

Example

Drug Type	How the drug name will appear in the formulary drug list
generic drug	***atorvastatin calcium***
generic drug marketed with a brand name	***oxycodone/acetaminophen*** (ENDOCET)
brand drug	LIPITOR (***atorvastatin calcium)***

What are drug tiers?

Drugs are placed into drug tiers based on defined categories. The amount you pay for drugs in different tiers will vary. You can find information about what you pay by drug tier in the *Summary of Benefits* of your Blue Shield *Evidence of Coverage* (EOC).

The column titled "Drug Tier" is the cost level you pay for a drug.

Drug Tier†	Tier name	Description
1	Formulary generic	Formulary generic drugs
2	Formulary brand	Formulary brand drugs
3	Non-formulary brand	Non-formulary brand drugs
4	Specialty or home self-injectable	Specialty drugs or self-administered injectables*

† Preventive health drugs, including contraceptive drugs and devices are covered at $0 when specific criteria are met.

** See your Evidence of Coverage for further details about coverage of specialty or self-administered injectables in your benefit.*

Note about multi-source brand drugs: If you or your doctor choose a brand drug when a generic drug equivalent is available, you will pay the difference in cost, plus the Tier 1 copayment or coinsurance. You or your doctor can ask for an exception. See "What if my drug requires a prior authorization or step therapy?" below for more information.

You can find information about specific prescription drug benefits and drug benefit exclusions in the Blue Shield *Evidence of Coverage*. For additional information about specific plans, call the customer service number on your Blue Shield member ID card.

Note: Blue Shield drug formularies apply to outpatient prescription drug benefits available through plans underwritten by Blue Shield of California (individually and collectively referred to as Blue Shield throughout this document).

How to read the formulary

The column titled "Coverage Requirements and Limits" identifies coverage restrictions or limits for drugs when applicable.

Coverage Requirements and Limits		Description
AL1	Age Limit	Prior authorization may be required if your age does not fall within the FDA, manufacturer, or treatment guideline recommendations.
GL	Gender Limit	Prior authorization may be required if the FDA, manufacturer, or treatment guidelines do not recommend the drug for a gender.
OAC	Oral Anti-Cancer	There is a maximum limit on the copayment/coinsurance amount for orally administered anti-cancer drugs. Please see your *Summary of Benefits* for more detailed information.
PA	Prior Authorization	Prior authorization is a health plan's requirement that the enrollee or the enrollee's prescribing provider obtain the health plan's authorization for a prescription drug before the health plan will cover the drug. The health plan shall grant a prior authorization when it is medically necessary for the enrollee to obtain the drug.
PH	Preventive Health Drugs	Affordable Care Act (ACA) preventive health drugs, including contraceptive drugs and devices, are covered at $0 when specific criteria are met.*
QLC	Quantity Limit	The prescription quantity covered is limited. Prior authorization is required for amounts greater than the limit.
RO	Retail Only	This prescription can be dispensed at retail pharmacies only. It is not covered through mail service.

SF	Starter Fill	Blue Shield's Starter Fill Specialty Drug Program allows initial prescriptions for select specialty drugs to be filled for up to a 15-day supply. When this occurs, the copayment or coinsurance will be prorated.
SP	Specialty Pharmacy	These drugs are available exclusively through select specialty pharmacies.
ST	Step Therapy	Step therapy is a process specifying the sequence in which different prescription drugs for a given medical condition and medically appropriate for a particular patient are prescribed. The health plan may require the enrollee to try one or more drugs to treat the enrollee's medical condition before the health plan will cover a particular drug for the condition pursuant to a step therapy request. If the enrollee's prescribing provider submits a request for step therapy exception, the health plans shall make exceptions to step therapy when the criteria are met.

* Does not apply to grandfathered plans, plans purchased on or before March 23, 2010.

How often will the formulary change?

This formulary is updated on the first of every month. Formulary changes that may not have prior notice include the following:

- A brand name drug may be moved to a higher tier or removed from the formulary if a new generic drug is added to the formulary,
- A drug may be removed from the formulary when it is removed from the market because the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) deems a drug to be unsafe or the drug's manufacturer removes the drug from the market, or
- A drug is added to the formulary, moved to a lower tier, or has a utilization management requirement removed.

Formulary changes that will have at least 30-day prior notice to an affected enrollee include the following:

- Moving a drug or dosage form to a higher tier,
- Removal of a drug or dosage form from the formulary,
- Adding or changing utilization management requirements or limits for a drug.
    - When a step therapy utilization management requirement changes, the new requirement will not require you to repeat the step therapy if

you are already taking the drug for your condition as long as the drug is still appropriate, your provider continues to prescribe the drug, and the drug is still considered safe and effective for your condition.

When a drug or dosage form is removed from the formulary, and a drug was previously approved for coverage for your medical condition, coverage for the drug will continue if your provider continues to prescribe the drug for your condition and the drug is prescribed appropriately and is safe and effective for your condition.

For the most current information about the Blue Shield Plus Drug Formulary, visit **blueshieldca.com/pharmacy**.

What is a medical benefit drug versus a drug covered under the Outpatient Prescription Drug Benefit?

A medical benefit drug is a drug that is not generally self-administered and administered by a health care professional. The Outpatient Prescription Drug Benefit includes FDA-approved drugs that are self-administered, commonly oral or self-injectable drugs, not otherwise excluded from coverage.

For additional information, check your Blue Shield *Evidence of Coverage* or call the customer service number on your Blue Shield member ID card.

What are preventive health drugs?

Preventive health drugs are select drugs required by health reform legislation to be covered at no charge to the member.* Preventive health drugs are determined based on evidence-based recommendations by the United States Preventive Services Task Force. For more details about preventive health drugs, visit **blueshieldca.com/pharmacy**.

What is a contraceptive drug or device?

Contraceptives are drugs or devices, such as diaphragms or cervical caps, that help prevent pregnancy. With the exceptions of brands that have a generic equivalent, these drugs and devices are covered with no member copayment.*

Brand contraceptives with a generic equivalent generally require a copayment. If your doctor or health care provider determines that a brand contraceptive with a generic equivalent is medically necessary for you, it will be covered without a copayment upon submission of an exception request. You, your representative, or your doctor may submit the request to Blue Shield. You can submit a request by calling the customer service number on your Blue Shield member ID card.

* Does not apply to grandfathered plans, plans purchased on or before March 23, 2010.

What diabetes care drugs and products are covered under the Outpatient Prescription Drug Benefit?

FDA-approved drugs for the treatment of diabetes are included in the formulary drug list. Diabetic testing supplies such as blood glucose test strips, urine test strips, lancets, and insulin syringes/pens covered under the Outpatient Prescription Drug Benefit are also included in the formulary drug list.

What if my drug requires a prior authorization or step therapy?

Drug prior authorization involves getting advance approval of coverage for a prescription medication based on medical necessity. Some drugs require a review of the patient's prescription and medical history to determine coverage.

Step therapy means a specific sequence in which prescription drugs for a particular medical condition must be tried. If a drug is subject to step therapy in this formulary, you may have to try one or more other drugs before your health insurance policy will cover that drug for your medical condition.

Step therapy requirements are based on how the FDA recommends a drug should be used, nationally recognized treatment guidelines, medical studies, information from the drug manufacturer, and the relative cost of treatment for a condition.

Your provider may submit a request for a prior authorization or an exception to the step therapy requirement.

How do I request a prior authorization or a step therapy exception?

To request prior authorization or a step therapy exception, please call the customer service number on your Blue Shield member ID card. You, your representative, or your doctor may submit the request to Blue Shield.

Once we receive all the needed supporting information, we will approve or deny the exception request based on medical necessity within 72 hours for non-urgent requests, or within 24 hours in urgent or exigent circumstances. If an approval or denial is not sent within these timeframes, then the request will be considered approved. If a request is approved, it will continue to be covered for the length of the prescription, including refills.

You are not required to complete step therapy with Blue Shield if a drug you are currently taking was approved for coverage for your medical condition by your previous health plan or you qualify for a step-therapy exception. In either case, the

drug will be covered by Blue Shield without step therapy if your provider continues to prescribe the drug for your condition and the drug is prescribed appropriately and is safe and effective for your condition.

If Blue Shield denies a request for prior authorization or a step therapy exception request, the member, an authorized representative, or the provider can file an appeal/grievance with Blue Shield, as described in the "Grievance Process" section of the EOC.

What if my drug is non-formulary or not listed?

The exception process involves requesting coverage of a non-formulary drug. A formulary exception, which allows coverage of a non-formulary drug is based on medical necessity.

To request a non-formulary coverage exception, please call the customer service number on your Blue Shield member ID card. You, your representative, or your doctor may submit an exception request to Blue Shield.

Once we receive all the needed supporting information, we will approve or deny the exception request based on medical necessity within 72 hours for non-urgent requests, or within 24 hours in urgent or exigent circumstances. If an approval or denial is not sent within these timeframes, then the request will be considered approved. If a request is approved, it will continue to be covered for the length of the prescription, including refills.

If Blue Shield denies a request for prior authorization or an exception request, the member, an authorized representative, or the provider can file an appeal/grievance with Blue Shield, as described in the "Grievance Process" section of the EOC.

If you are currently taking the drug and it was approved by your previous health plan or by us, we will not require you to try other drugs first. If the drug is safe and effective for your condition, we will continue to cover it.

Participating retail pharmacies

You can fill prescriptions at any participating (network) pharmacy unless it is a prescription for a specialty drug. Blue Shield contracts with a wide network of retail pharmacies. To find a network pharmacy, visit **blueshieldca.com/pharmacy.**

What are specialty drugs?

Specialty drugs are drugs that may require coordination of care, close monitoring, or extensive patient training for self-administration. These requirements generally cannot be met by a retail pharmacy. Specialty drugs may also require special

handling or manufacturing processes (such as biotechnology), restriction to certain physicians or pharmacies, or reporting of certain clinical events to the FDA. Specialty drugs are usually high-cost.

Specialty drugs may require prior authorization for medical necessity by Blue Shield. Most specialty drugs are available exclusively from a Network Specialty Pharmacy. If coverage is approved, a Network Specialty Pharmacy can provide specialty drugs by mail or, upon your request, can transfer the specialty drug to an associated retail store for pickup. Call the customer service number on your Blue Shield member ID card or visit **blueshieldca.com/pharmacy** if you have questions about specialty drugs.

Mail service pharmacy

Blue Shield offers an easy-to-use mail service prescription drug program through our contracted mail service pharmacy. You can save time and money using the mail service drug program. It can be a convenient way to fill maintenance medications for up to a 90-day supply. Maintenance medications are drugs that doctors prescribe on an ongoing, regular basis to maintain health. For more information on using the mail service prescription benefit, visit **blueshieldca.com/pharmacy**.

Categorical List of Prescription Drugs

PRESCRIPTION DRUG NAME

NOTICES AVAILABLE ONLINE

Nondiscrimination and Language Assistance Services

Blue Shield complies with applicable state and federal civil rights laws. We also offer language assistance services at no additional cost.

View our nondiscrimination notice and language assistance notice: **blueshieldca.com/notices**. You can also call for language assistance services: **(866) 346-7198 (TTY: 711)**.

If you are unable to access the website above and would like to receive a copy of the nondiscrimination notice and language assistance notice, please call Customer Care at **(888) 256-3650 (TTY: 711)**.

Servicios de asistencia en idiomas y avisos de no discriminación

Blue Shield cumple con las leyes de derechos civiles federales y estatales aplicables. También, ofrecemos servicios de asistencia en idiomas sin costo adicional.

Vea nuestro aviso de no discriminación y nuestro aviso de asistencia en idiomas en **blueshieldca.com/notices**. Para obtener servicios de asistencia en idiomas, también puede llamar al **(866) 346-7198 (TTY: 711)**.

Si no puede acceder al sitio web que aparece arriba y desea recibir una copia del aviso de no discriminación y del aviso de asistencia en idiomas, llame a Atención al Cliente al **(888) 256-3650 (TTY: 711)**.

非歧視通知和語言協助服務

Blue Shield 遵守適用的州及聯邦政府的民權法。同時，我們免費提供語言協助服務。

如需檢視我司的非歧視通知和語言幫助通知，請造訪 **blueshieldca.com/notices**。您還可致電尋求語言協助服務：**(866) 346-7198 (TTY: 711)**。

如果您無法造訪上述網站，且希望收到一份非歧視通知和語言幫助通知的副本，請致電客戶服務部，電話：**(888) 256-3650 (TTY: 711)**。

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