

Medicare Advantage plans

Medical policy and criteria

MEDICAL POLICY UPDATE

Premera Blue Cross Medicare Advantage reviews all medical policies and criteria annually. The following updates are available on the Premera Medicare Advantage provider website at premera.com/wa/provider/medicare-advantage/. Simply click on [View medical and pharmacy policy updates](#) located on the right side of the Medicare Advantage provider landing page.

PHARMACY PART B CODES ADDED TO THE PRIOR AUTHORIZATION LIST EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 16, 2020.

| HCPCS Code | Drug Name |
|------------|------------|
| J0223 | Givlaari |
| J0791 | Adakveo |
| J0896 | Reblozyl |
| J1429 | Vyondys 53 |
| J3399 | Zolgensma |

MEDICAL CODES ADDED TO THE PRIOR AUTHORIZATION LIST EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 16, 2020.

| Policy | Description/Background |
|-------------|--|
| Acupuncture | The management of chronic low back pain can take both pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic approaches. The mechanism of action of analgesia secondary to acupuncture is unclear, possibly multimodal. However, there are some physiologic effects that have been noted with its use. For example, it is thought that the immediate analgesic effects of acupuncture may be dependent on neural (nerve) innervation. Acupuncture has also been shown to induce the release of endogenous opioids in various parts of the brain. Local tissue effects including release of adenosine at the site of needle stimulation have also been observed as have increases in local |

blood flow. Other modes of action have been reported including local and myofascial trigger point needling effects, segmental pain effects, extra-segmental pain effects, and central regulatory effects.

Medical Policy Statement: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will cover acupuncture for chronic low back pain when criteria are met.

We've added the following codes to the prior authorization list: 20560, 20561.

Detailed CMS Policy Documents:
NCD: Acupuncture (30.3)

Decision Memo: Acupuncture for Chronic Low Back Pain (CAG-00452N)

MLN Matters: National Coverage Determination (NCD 30.3.3): Acupuncture for Chronic Low Back Pain (cLBP) (MM11755)

LCD: There is no LCD for this topic.