


PHARMACY / MEDICAL POLICY – 5.01.559

IL-5 Inhibitors

Effective Date:	Aug. 1, 2018	RELATED MEDICAL POLICIES:
Last Revised:	Jan. 1, 2019	5.01.513 Xolair® (omalizumab)
Replaces:	N/A	

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Introduction

Eosinophils are a type of white blood cell. Eosinophils promote inflammation to isolate germs and other substances harmful to the body. However, too much inflammation can lead to other medical issues, like asthma. IL-5 inhibitors are drugs that reduce the number of eosinophils. IL-5 inhibitors are add-on medications used to help prevent severe asthma attacks. This policy describes when IL-5 inhibitors may be considered medically necessary.

Note: The Introduction section is for your general knowledge and is not to be taken as policy coverage criteria. The rest of the policy uses specific words and concepts familiar to medical professionals. It is intended for providers. A provider can be a person, such as a doctor, nurse, psychologist, or dentist. A provider also can be a place where medical care is given, like a hospital, clinic, or lab. This policy informs them about when a service may be covered.

Policy Coverage Criteria

Drug	Medical Necessity
Nucala® (mepolizumab)	Nucala® (mepolizumab) may be considered medically necessary for the labeled indication of add-on maintenance treatment of patients with severe asthma aged 12 years and older, and with an eosinophilic phenotype, when the following

Drug	Medical Necessity
	<p>conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patient has a history of 2 or more exacerbations in the previous year, requiring bursts of systemic steroids and commonly requiring urgent care visits,* ER visits and/or hospitalizations, despite regular use of high-dose inhaled corticosteroids (such as those listed in the table below), plus at least one additional controller (such as long-acting beta agonists (LABAs) salmeterol or formoterol. <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Patient has had AT LEAST ONE of the following 2 criteria in the previous 12 months: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Blood **eosinophil count greater than 150 cells/mcL at the time of treatment <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sputum **eosinophil count greater than or equal to 3% <p>*Note: Urgent care visits are not always required, since some patients are given a standing prescription for a systemic steroid that they can fill when exacerbations occur, eliminating the need for an unnecessary urgent care visit that could actually delay initiation of the steroid burst.</p> <p>**Note: Eosinophil count is a type of blood test that measures the quantity of a type of white blood cell called eosinophils. If the number in the blood or sputum is high (greater than 150 cells/mcL or 3%, respectively), this suggests that the patient is unresponsive to their regular maintenance (inhaled or oral) corticosteroid treatment, in which case Nucala can be considered medically necessary.</p> <p>Nucala® (mepolizumab) may be considered medically necessary for the labeled indication of treatment of adult patients with eosinophilic granulomatosis with polyangiitis (EGPA).</p> <p>All other uses of mepolizumab, including for treatment of other eosinophilic conditions or for the relief of acute bronchospasm or status asthmaticus, are considered investigational.</p> <p>Initial and all subsequent treatment requests may be approved</p>



Drug	Medical Necessity
	<p>for 12 months at a time.</p> <p>Approval beyond the first authorization would require evidence (ie, chart notes) demonstrating continued clinical benefit.</p>
<p>Fasenra™ (benralizumab)</p>	<p>Fasenra™ (benralizumab) may be considered medically necessary for the labeled indication of add-on maintenance treatment of patients with severe asthma aged 12 years and older, and with an eosinophilic phenotype, when the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patient has a history of 2 or more exacerbations in the previous year, requiring bursts of systemic steroids and commonly requiring urgent care visits,* ER visits and/or hospitalizations, despite regular use of high-dose inhaled corticosteroids (such as those listed in the table below), plus at least one additional controller (such as long-acting beta agonists (LABAs) salmeterol or formoterol. <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Patient has had AT LEAST ONE of the following 2 criteria in the previous 12 months: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Blood **eosinophil count greater than 150 cells/mcL at the time of treatment <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sputum **eosinophil count greater than or equal to 3% <p>*Note: Urgent care visits are not always required, since some patients are given a standing prescription for a systemic steroid that they can fill when exacerbations occur, eliminating the need for an unnecessary urgent care visit that could actually delay initiation of the steroid burst.</p> <p>**Note: Eosinophil count is a type of blood test that measures the quantity of a type of white blood cell called eosinophils. If the number in the blood or sputum is high (greater than 150 cells/mcL or 3%, respectively), this suggests that the patient is unresponsive to their regular maintenance (inhaled or oral) corticosteroid treatment, in which case Nucala can be considered medically necessary.</p> <p>All other uses of benralizumab, including for treatment of</p>



Drug	Medical Necessity
	<p>other eosinophilic conditions or for the relief of acute bronchospasm or status asthmaticus, are considered investigational.</p> <p>Initial and all subsequent treatment requests may be approved for 12 months at a time.</p> <p>Approval beyond the first authorization would require evidence (ie, chart notes) demonstrating continued clinical benefit.</p>

High Dose Regimens of Inhaled Corticosteroids			
Drug Name	Low Dose	Medium Dose	High Dose
Beclomethasone HFA (Qvar) 40 mcg per puff 80 mcg per puff	80 to 160 mcg 2 to 4 puffs 1 to 2 puffs	>160 to 320 mcg 3 to 4 puffs	>320 mcg >4 puffs
Budesonide DPI (Pulmicort Flexhaler) 90 mcg per inhalation 180 mcg per inhalation	180 to 360 mcg 2 to 4 inhalation 1 to 2 inhalations	>360 to 720 mcg 3 to 4 inhalations	>720 mcg >4 inhalations
Ciclesonide HFA (Alvesco) 80 mcg per puff 160 mcg per puff	80 to 160 mcg 1 to 2 puffs 1 puff	>160 to 320 mcg 3 to 4 puffs 2 puffs	>320 mcg >2 puffs
Fluticasone propionate HFA (Flovent HFA) 44 mcg per puff 110 mcg per puff 220 mcg per puff	88 to 220 mcg 2 to 5 puffs 1 to 2 puffs	>220 to 440 mcg 3 to 4 puffs 2 puffs	>440 mcg >2 puffs
Fluticasone propionate DPI (Flovent Diskus)	100 to 250 mcg	>250 to 500 mcg	>500 mcg



High Dose Regimens of Inhaled Corticosteroids			
Drug Name	Low Dose	Medium Dose	High Dose
50 mcg per inhalation	2 to 5 inhalations		
100 mcg per inhalation	1 to 2 inhalations	3 to 5 inhalations	
250 mcg per inhalation	1 inhalation	2 inhalations	2 inhalations
500 mcg per inhalation (strength not available in the U.S.)		1 inhalation	>1 inhalation
Fluticasone furoate DPI (Arnuity Ellipta)*	Not available for low dose	100 mcg	200 mcg
100 mcg per inhalation		1 inhalation	2 inhalations
200 mcg per actuation			1 inhalation
Mometasone DPI (Asmanex DPI)	110 to 220 mcg	>220 to 440 mcg	>440 mcg
110 mcg per inhalation	1 to 2 inhalations		
220 mcg per inhalation	1 inhalation	2 inhalations	>2 inhalations
Mometasone HFA (Asmanex HFA)	100 to 200 mcg	>200 to 400 mcg	>400 mcg
100 mcg per actuation	1 to 2 inhalations		
200 mcg per actuation	1 inhalation	2 inhalations	>2 inhalations

***Note:** Inhaled fluticasone furoate has a greater anti-inflammatory potency per microgram than fluticasone propionate inhalers. Thus, fluticasone furoate is administered at a lower daily dose and used only once daily.

Coding

Code	Description
HCPCS	
J0517	Injection, benralizumab, 1 mg (new code effective 1/1/19)
J2182	Injection, mepolizumab (Nucala®), 1 mg
J3490	Unclassified drugs
J3590	Unclassified biologics



Note: CPT codes, descriptions and materials are copyrighted by the American Medical Association (AMA). HCPCS codes, descriptions and materials are copyrighted by Centers for Medicare Services (CMS).

Related Information

Benefit Application

Nucala® (mepolizumab) is covered under both pharmacy and medical benefits.

Fasenra™ (benralizumab) is covered under the medical benefit only.

Consideration of Age

The ages noted in the policy statements are based on the FDA labeling for these agents.

Evidence Review

Description

Asthma

Asthma is a chronic disease that causes airways of the lungs to become narrow due to inflammation, which leads to difficulty breathing. During an asthma attack, breathing can become so difficult that the patient is unable to get enough oxygen. Severe attacks can make the patient seek medical attention, even hospitalization, and these attacks can be life-threatening. There are more than 400,000 asthma-related hospitalizations each year. Severe asthma is estimated to account for 5-10% of all cases, with only 3% being severe, refractory, eosinophilic disease.⁸ Patients with severe asthma are at risk for frequent exacerbations and hospitalizations. Development of therapies to control asthma in this subpopulation is an unmet need.

More than 22 million people in the U.S. have asthma, and it is the most common chronic childhood disease.⁴ Asthma affects many people regardless of age, race, and sex. According to



the CDC, as of 2013, 8.3% of children and 7% of adults struggle with asthma. African Americans have the highest prevalence at 9.9%, followed by Whites at 7.4% and Hispanics, 5.9%.

In asthmatics, certain internal or external triggers can set off an allergic or hypersensitivity reaction in the bronchial airways. In some patients, this is associated with hypereosinophilia. IL-5 is a key player in the growth, development and function of eosinophils to cause and sustain airway inflammation. Inflammation can lead to asthma attacks. Repeated attacks can lead to worse symptoms, sensitivity to further attacks, and bad outcomes including death.

Alternative treatments for asthma include inhaled corticosteroids (ICS), inhaled long-acting beta-adrenergic agents (LABAs), leukotriene modifying drugs, methylxanthines, and the monoclonal antibody to IgE omalizumab (Xolair). Inhaled corticosteroids have become the cornerstone of maintenance therapy for patients with persistent asthma. In spite of these available therapies, there are patients who remain poorly controlled on maximum therapy (including oral corticosteroids) and there are patients with severe persistent asthma who are resistant to corticosteroids.

Nucala® (mepolizumab)

Nucala® (mepolizumab), a humanized monoclonal antibody (IgG1 kappa), is the first of a novel class of medications capable of treating severe asthma in refractory patients. Unlike omalizumab, a monoclonal antibody that is effective in treating IgE related asthma, mepolizumab is designed to prevent exacerbations in patients with eosinophil mediated disease. Eosinophils have a variety of functions in inflammatory immune reactions. They can bind worms and parasites via IgE, present antigens, release pro-inflammatory mediators including IL-5 and leukotrienes, and kill microorganisms. Within their granules they contain peroxidase, major basic protein, and eosinophil-derived neurotoxin. IL-5 acts on eosinophils directly via the alpha chain of IL-5Ra, a type I IL-5 receptor. IL-5 also plays a role in other cytokine cellular mediators such as basophils and mast cells. Mepolizumab binds directly to IL-5 with high specificity and also high affinity, preventing the association of IL-5 with the eosinophil receptor IL-5Ra and thus preventing the inflammatory cascade.

Efficacy

Mepolizumab is a recently-approved new alternative for treating severe eosinophilic asthma. The key studies supporting efficacy of mepolizumab in severe eosinophilic asthma are the DREAM and MENSA trials. In DREAM, 621 refractory asthma patients were randomized on a



1:1:1:1 ratio to placebo, 75mg mepolizumab IV, 250mg IV, and 750mg IV. Standard background treatment included ≥ 880 mcg/day fluticasone equivalent +/- oral corticosteroids (OCS) and other controllers. Eosinophilic asthma was defined as having an eosinophil count ≥ 300 cells/mcL, sputum eosinophils 3%, exhaled NO ≥ 50 ppb, or deterioration of control in the last 12 months following $< 26\%$ reduction in inhaled corticosteroid (ICS). Patients received 13 infusions at 4 week intervals. The primary outcome was the rate of significant exacerbations from start through 4 weeks after the last visit (approximately 12 months). The 3 mepolizumab groups experienced reduction in exacerbation rates per year of 48% (95% CI 31–61%; $p < 0.0001$), 39% (19–54%; $p = 0.0005$), and 52% (36–64%; $p < 0.0001$) vs placebo, respectively. A post hoc analysis examined differences in exacerbation rates in OCS dependent patients (3.12 P; 1.54 M) and non-OCS dependent (1.9 P; 1.07 M). Both groups benefited from the addition of mepolizumab.

In MENSA, 576 patients with recurrent exacerbations on high-dose ICS and with eosinophil counts of ≥ 300 cells/mcL in the last 12 months or those 150 cells/mcL were randomized to mepolizumab 75mg IV, 100mg SQ, or placebo for 32 weeks. The primary endpoint was exacerbation rate. The 100mg SQ dose showed a 53% reduction (47% for 75mg IV) over placebo at 32 weeks. Unlike in the DREAM trial where FEV1 improvement was < 82 mL for all groups and not statistically significant, in MENSA, FEV1 in the SQ treatment group improved 98mL from baseline over placebo.

In a smaller study, 135 patients with severe eosinophilic asthma were randomized to placebo or mepolizumab 100mg SQ in addition to baseline maintenance therapy. After a 3-8 week optimization phase, a 16 week steroid reduction phase followed. At the end of this phase, the placebo group was not able to reduce the OCS dose, while the treatment group achieved a median OCS dose reduction of 50%. One-quarter of the study group had no decrease in steroid dosage or withdrew, and 16% were able to achieve complete or near complete steroid reduction.

Another study used an investigational anti IL-5 monoclonal antibody during asthma exacerbations in the emergency department for patients with high eosinophil counts. Patients in the treatment group had fewer exacerbations at 12 weeks than those given placebo (3.59 vs 1.82; $P = .01$) and fewer exacerbations leading to hospitalization (1.62 vs 0.65; $P = .02$). Providers may assume these results apply to mepolizumab as well.



Safety

Mepolizumab is generally well tolerated compared to placebo. Common adverse events included headache, chest pain, flushing, erectile dysfunction, rash, conjunctivitis, fatigue, upper respiratory tract infection, rhinitis, bronchitis, sinusitis, viral infection, injury, nausea, and pharyngitis. Urinary tract infections and muscle spasms have also been reported in more than 3% of treated patients. A review of exposure-adjusted nonfatal serious adverse events using the three main efficacy trials as well as open label follow-up data (n=1299) was performed by the FDA. Placebo-subtracted SAEs per 1000 subject-years were (total): infections 5 (54.2), cardiac disease 3 (6.8), musculoskeletal and connective tissue disease 6 (13.6), immune system disorders 3 (6.8), metabolic and nutrition related 6.8 (6.8), skin and subcutaneous disorders 6.8 (6.8), and hepatobiliary disorders 6.8 (6.8). Within this data, the notable conditions above placebo are (total): herpes zoster 13.6 (13.6), atrial flutter 3.3 (6.8), and hypersensitivity 3.3 (6.8). There were 3 new malignancies in the placebo group (N=412) and 0 in the mepolizumab group (N=263).

No imbalance in withdrawals occurred across the three key studies supporting efficacy. Four deaths were reported across the treatment groups (N=916) but only three were caused by respiratory problems. Due to the severity of asthma in the patient populations, no deaths have been attributed directly related to mepolizumab treatment.

A year-long followup study (mepolizumab N=29) conducted over a 12-month period monitored the rebound effect of taking patients off of anti IL-5 treatment. While no appreciable increase in exacerbation rate was found in the placebo-treated group, the mepolizumab group increased in exacerbations from 0.56 per patient in the first three months to 1.2 in months 3-6 (P < 0.007). However, the rates of exacerbations never went over pre-treatment baselines.

Fasenra® (Benralizumab)

Fasenra® (Benralizumab) is a monoclonal antibody to the IL-5 receptor. It binds to the receptor's alpha subunit on the cell surface of eosinophils and basophils, leading to cell death and accompanied by a rapid and nearly complete elimination of eosinophils in blood and airway sputum.²⁹ Also, a reduction in cytotoxic granules (eg, ECP, EDN) was seen following benralizumab administration.³⁰ Note that the site of action of the other two IL-5 antagonists for severe eosinophilic asthma, mepolizumab (Nucala®) and reslizumab (Cinqair®), is different from that of benralizumab. Mepolizumab and reslizumab act by binding to circulating IL-5.



Efficacy

The CALIMA (n=1306) and SIROCCO (n=1205) trials were double blind, placebo controlled, multicenter phase 3 pivotal trials that enrolled adults with asthma uncontrolled by inhaled corticosteroids and long-acting beta agonists.^{21,22} Subjects received BEN 30mg given by subcutaneous injection every four weeks for 3 doses, then every four or eight weeks for 48-56 weeks, along with stable doses of background therapy. The primary outcome for both trials was the asthma exacerbation rate in subjects with baseline eosinophil counts of at least 300 cells per microliter. Key secondary outcomes were the exacerbation rates in subjects with eosinophil counts under 300 cells per microliter, lung function, and asthma symptom scores.

The table below shows results for subjects broken down by those with higher eosinophil levels at baseline (≥ 300 cells/ μL), which is the primary analysis group, and results for the lower eosinophil group (< 300 cells/ μL), a secondary analysis group.

CALIMA: Placebo adjusted changes in exacerbation rates, lung function, and asthma symptom scores by baseline eosinophil level and treatment regimen

	Baseline eosinophils ≥ 300 cells/ μL (primary analysis group)		Baseline eosinophils < 300 cells/ μL (secondary analysis group)	
	BEN Q 4 wks (n=241)	BEN Q 8 wks (n=239)	BEN Q 4 wks (n=116)	BEN Q 8 wks (n=125)
Mean (95%CI)				
Exacerbation rate	-0.33 (-0.54, -0.12)*	-0.26 (-0.48, 0.04)*	-0.43 (-0.7, -0.08)*	-0.48 (-0.82, -0.14)*
FEV ₁ (in liters)	0.125 (0.037, 0.213)*	0.116 (0.028, 0.204)*	0.064 (0.049, 0.176)	0.15 (0.127, 0.096)
Asthma symptom score	-0.19 (0.38, -0.01)*	-0.25 (-0.44, -0.07)*	-0.24 (-0.51, 0.03)	-0.10 (-0.37, 0.16)

* indicates a statistically significant difference vs. placebo, CI= confidence interval, RR= rate reduction, Q= every, wks=weeks



SIROCCO: Placebo adjusted changes in exacerbation rates, lung function, and asthma symptom scores by baseline eosinophil level and treatment regimen

	Baseline eosinophils \geq 300 cells/ μ L (primary analysis group)		Baseline eosinophils < 300 cells/ μ L (secondary analysis group)	
	BEN Q 4 wks (n=275)	BEN Q 8 wks (n=267)	BEN Q 4 wks (n=124)	BEN Q 8 wks (n=131)
Mean (95%CI)				
Exacerbation rate	-0.60 (-0.87, -0.33)*	-0.68 (-0.95, -0.42)*	-0.36 (-0.71, 0.00)*	-0.21 (-0.58, 0.16)
FEV ₁ (in liters)	0.106 (0.016, 0.196)*	0.159 (0.068, 0.249)*	-0.025 (-0.134, 0.083)	0.102 (0.003, 0.208)
Asthma symptom score	-0.15 (-0.34, 0.4)	-0.29 (-0.48, -.10)*	0.00 (-0.27, 0.27)	-0.22 (-0.48, 0.05)

* indicates a statistically significant difference vs. placebo, CI= confidence interval, Q= every, wks=weeks

A published, post-hoc, subgroup analysis of CALIMA and SIROCCO focused on results in the BEN 30mg every 8 week cohorts, excluding data from the every 4 week cohorts.³⁵ The goal was to ascertain the effect of BEN using a different cutoff for subgroup analyses of 150 cells/ μ L, instead of the pre-defined 300 cells/ μ L cutoff. Details of these subgroup analyses are shown below and demonstrate that most key outcome results were statistically significant in the cohorts with baseline eosinophil counts of at least 150 cells/ μ L compared to placebo, but not in those with lower counts.

Placebo-adjusted outcomes by baseline eosinophil count (BEN 30mg Q8 week cohorts only)

	Baseline blood eosinophils \geq 150 cells/ μ L		Baseline blood eosinophils <150 cells/ μ L	
	SIROCCO (n=325)	CALIMA (n=300)	SIROCCO (n=48)	CALIMA (n=48)
mean (95% CI)				
All exacerbations	-0.63 (-0.91, -0.345)*	-0.40 (-0.61, -0.19)*	-0.33 (-0.91, 0.25)	-0.54 (-1.23, 0.14)
ED visit/hosp	-0.10 (-0.19, -0.002)*	Not calculable	0.15 (-0.10, 0.40)	Not calculable
FEV ₁ in liters	0.163 (0.087, 0.239)*	0.116 (0.41, 0.191)*	0.140 (-0.45, 0.325)	-0.131 (-0.306, 0.045)
Asthma sx score	-0.23 (-0.41, -0.06)*	-0.16 (-0.33, 0.01)	-0.40 (-0.78, -0.03)*	0.04 (-0.37, 0.45)



* indicates a statistically significant difference vs. placebo, sx=symptom

A second published, post-hoc, subgroup analysis of pooled data from CALIMA and SIROCCO showed that trial subjects with baseline blood eosinophils of 150 cells/ μ L or more had significantly better reductions in the annual rate of asthma exacerbations compared to placebo.³⁶ The table below shows the relationship between baseline eosinophil levels and change in asthma exacerbation rates for this post hoc analysis.

Placebo-adjusted asthma exacerbation rate by baseline blood eosinophil count and dosing regimen³⁹

Eosinophil cells/ μ L	Benralizumab 30mg every four weeks	Benralizumab 30mg every eight weeks
<150	-0.29 (95% CI -0.71, 0.13) n=101	-0.35 (95% CI -0.76, 0.06) n=105
150-299	-0.43 (95% CI -0.79, -0.08)* n=136	-0.27 (95% CI -0.65, 0.10) n=147
300-449	-0.41 (95% CI -0.66, -0.17)* n=216	-0.32 (95% CI -0.58, -0.05)* n=201
\geq 450	-0.47 (95% CI -0.69, -0.25)* n=295	-0.59 (95% CI -0.8, -0.37)* n=298

* indicates a statistically significant difference vs. placebo, CI= confidence interval

ZONA²³ (n=220) was a 28 week, randomized, double blind, placebo controlled phase 3 trial that compared the ability of BEN to reduce oral corticosteroid use in asthmatic adults with a minimum blood eosinophil count of 150 cells per microliter taking 7.5mg to 40mg of prednisone daily and stable doses of background therapy prior to enrollment. The dosing regimens of BEN were the same as those used in CALIMA and SIROCCO. The graphs below show a marked and statistically significant reduction in oral prednisone requirements in both BEN groups vs. placebo, while concurrently reducing asthma exacerbation rates. Also, a greater proportion of subjects in the BEN groups were able to reduce their oral prednisone to physiologic levels (\leq 5mg/day) compared to placebo.

Safety

The available safety evidence for BEN in severe asthma includes four yearlong trials (N=2125/3220)^{21,22} and two trials of 3-6 months duration (N=217/330)^{25,26}. The range of doses



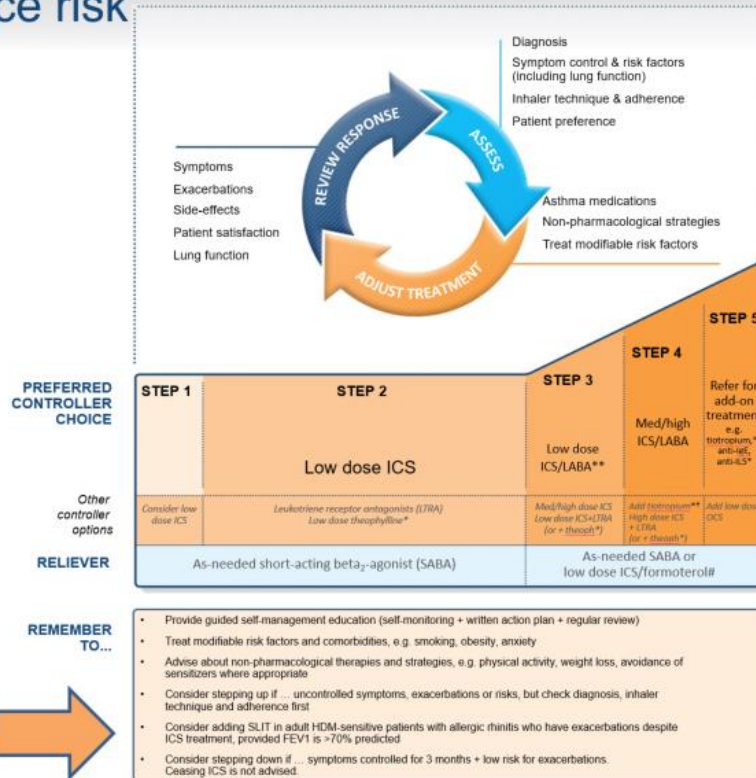
studied was from 2mg to 100mg, given by subcutaneous injection every 4 or 8 weeks, or by a one-time IV infusion. An overview of safety information from the pivotal trials is given here. These data represent the largest number of subjects receiving BEN for up to a year (N=1,664). Long-term safety data are being collected in the extension trial, BORA (NCT02258542), which is not yet completed.³⁴ The information presented here focuses on AEs of a more serious nature. There were nine deaths reported, seven with BEN and two with placebo, over the course of the year long pivotal trials (N=2511).^{21,22} Deaths are not unexpected in this patient population. Serious adverse events (SAEs) occurred less frequently with BEN vs. placebo in the CALIMA trial (9-10% vs. 14%), the most common being worsening of asthma (4-5% vs. 5%). Ten subjects (<1%) withdrew from the trial due to an SAE, seven in the BEN groups and three in the placebo group. In the SIROCCO trial, SAEs occurred less frequently with BEN vs. placebo (12% vs. 14%), the most common being worsening of asthma (5-6% vs. 8%). Other SAEs were reported at less than 1%. Between 13%-15% of subjects developed an antibody response to BEN, but this did not affect efficacy and was not associated with hypersensitivity reactions. Overall, the AE profile of BEN is similar to that of placebo across these pivotal trials, including the rate of injection site reactions.

Practice Guidelines and Position Statements

IL-5 inhibitors are recommended as add-on treatment in step 5 of the GINA 2017 guidelines for asthma treatment⁴¹. See figure below.



Stepwise approach to control asthma symptoms and reduce risk



SLIT added as an option

GINA 2017, Box 3-5 (1/8)

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2017 Update

Recent data do not indicate a need for change to the above medical necessity criteria.

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History

Date	Comments
01/12/16	New policy, add to Medical subsection. Considered medically necessary for labeled indications when criteria are met.
02/09/16	Interim Update. Medical necessity criteria liberalized; deterioration of asthma control criterion removed.
02/18/16	Minor typographical and formatting errors fixed.
01/01/17	Coding update; added new HCPCS code J2182 effective 1/1/17. Moved coding table to Policy Guidelines section.
07/07/17	Policy moved into new format, no changes to policy statement.
09/01/17	Annual Review, approved August 22, 2017. No changes to policy statement. A literature search was conducted from 1/1/16 to 8/15/17. No new studies were found that would require changes to this policy. Removed HCPCS code J3490. Title changed from Mepolizumab (Nucala®) to Nucala® (mepolizumab).
02/01/18	Interim Review, approved January 16, 2018. Policy title was changed from "Nucala® (mepolizumab)" to "IL-5 Inhibitors" to include Fasenra™ in policy. Added HCPCS codes J3490 and J3590.
03/01/18	Interim Review, approved February 27, 2018. Criteria for Nucala updated to include FDA label update. Reference was updated.
08/01/18	Annual Review, approved July 13, 2018. No changes made to policy.
09/21/18	Minor update. Added Consideration of Age statement.
01/01/19	Coding update, added HCPCS code J0517 (new code effective 1/1/19).

Disclaimer: This medical policy is a guide in evaluating the medical necessity of a particular service or treatment. The Company adopts policies after careful review of published peer-reviewed scientific literature, national guidelines and local standards of practice. Since medical technology is constantly changing, the Company reserves the right to review and update policies as appropriate. Member contracts differ in their benefits. Always consult the member benefit booklet or contact a member service representative to determine coverage for a specific medical service or supply. CPT codes, descriptions and materials are copyrighted by the American Medical Association (AMA). ©2019 Premera All Rights Reserved.

Scope: Medical policies are systematically developed guidelines that serve as a resource for Company staff when determining coverage for specific medical procedures, drugs or devices. Coverage for medical services is subject to the limits and conditions of the member benefit plan. Members and their providers should consult the member



benefit booklet or contact a customer service representative to determine whether there are any benefit limitations applicable to this service or supply. This medical policy does not apply to Medicare Advantage.



Discrimination is Against the Law

Premera Blue Cross complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Premera does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Premera:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - Qualified sign language interpreters
 - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - Qualified interpreters
 - Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact the Civil Rights Coordinator.

If you believe that Premera has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with:

Civil Rights Coordinator - Complaints and Appeals
PO Box 91102, Seattle, WA 98111
Toll free 855-332-4535, Fax 425-918-5592, TTY 800-842-5357
Email AppealsDepartmentInquiries@Premera.com

You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. If you need help filing a grievance, the Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW, Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201, 1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)
Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

Getting Help in Other Languages

This Notice has Important Information. This notice may have important information about your application or coverage through Premera Blue Cross. There may be key dates in this notice. You may need to take action by certain deadlines to keep your health coverage or help with costs. You have the right to get this information and help in your language at no cost. Call 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

አማርኛ (Amharic):

ይህ ማስታወቂያ አስፈላጊ መረጃ ይዟል። ይህ ማስታወቂያ ስለ ማመልከቻዎ ወይም የ Premera Blue Cross ሽፋን አስፈላጊ መረጃ ሊኖረው ይችላል። በዚህ ማስታወቂያ ውስጥ ቁልፍ ቀናት ሊኖሩ ይችላሉ። የጤና ሽፋንዎን ለማመጣት በአስፈላጊ እርዳታ ለማግኘት በተውሰኑ የጊዜ ገደቦች እርምጃ መውሰድ ይገባዎት ይሆናል። ይህን መረጃ እንዲያገኙ እና የለምንም ክፍያ በቋንቋዎ እርዳታ እንዲያገኙ መሰታወቅ አለዎት። በስልክ ቁጥር 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357) ይደውሉ።

العربية (Arabic):

يحتوي هذا الإشعار على معلومات هامة. قد يحوي هذا الإشعار معلومات مهمة بخصوص طلبك أو التخطيط التي تزيد الحصول عليها من خلال Premera Blue Cross. قد تكون هناك تواريخ مهمة في هذا الإشعار. وقد تحتاج لاتخاذ إجراء في تاريخ معينة للحفاظ على تغطيتك الصحية أو للمساعدة في دفع التكاليف. يحق لك الحصول على هذه المعلومات والمساعدة بلغتك دون تكبد أية تكلفة. اتصل بـ 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357)

中文 (Chinese):

本通知有重要的訊息。本通知可能有關於您透過 Premera Blue Cross 提交的申請或保險的重要訊息。本通知內可能有重要日期。您可能需要在截止日期之前採取行動，以保留您的健康保險或者費用補貼。您有權利免費以您的母語得到本訊息和幫助。請撥電話 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357)。

Oromoo (Cushite):

Beeksisni kun odeeffannoo barbaachisaa qaba. Beeksisni kun sagantaa yookan karaa Premera Blue Cross tiin tajaajila keessan ilaalchisee odeeffannoo barbaachisaa qabaachuu danda'a. Guyyaawwan murteessaa ta'an beeksisa kana keessatti ilaalaa. Tarii kaffaltiidhaan deeggaramuuf yookan tajaajila fayyaa keessaniif guyyaa dhumaa irratti wanti raawwattan jiraachuu danda'a. Kaffaltii irraa bilisa haala ta'een afaan keessaniin odeeffannoo argachuu fi deeggarsa argachuuf mirga ni qabaattu. Lakkoofsa bilbilaa 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357) tii bilbilaa.

Français (French):

Cet avis a d'importantes informations. Cet avis peut avoir d'importantes informations sur votre demande ou la couverture par l'intermédiaire de Premera Blue Cross. Le présent avis peut contenir des dates clés. Vous devez peut-être prendre des mesures par certains délais pour maintenir votre couverture de santé ou d'aide avec les coûts. Vous avez le droit d'obtenir cette information et de l'aide dans votre langue à aucun coût. Appelez le 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Kreyòl ayisyen (Creole):

Avi sila a gen Enfòmasyon Enpòtan ladann. Avi sila a kapab genyen enfòmasyon enpòtan konsènan aplikasyon w lan oswa konsènan kouvèti asirans lan atravè Premera Blue Cross. Kapab genyen dat ki enpòtan nan avi sila a. Ou ka gen pou pran kèk aksyon avan sèten dat limit pou ka kenbe kouvèti asirans sante w la oswa pou yo ka ede w avèk depans yo. Se dwa w pou resewva enfòmasyon sa a ak asistans nan lang ou pale a, san ou pa gen pou peye pou sa. Rele nan 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Deutsche (German):

Diese Benachrichtigung enthält wichtige Informationen. Diese Benachrichtigung enthält unter Umständen wichtige Informationen bezüglich Ihres Antrags auf Krankenversicherungsschutz durch Premera Blue Cross. Suchen Sie nach eventuellen wichtigen Terminen in dieser Benachrichtigung. Sie könnten bis zu bestimmten Stichtagen handeln müssen, um Ihren Krankenversicherungsschutz oder Hilfe mit den Kosten zu behalten. Sie haben das Recht, kostenlose Hilfe und Informationen in Ihrer Sprache zu erhalten. Rufen Sie an unter 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Hmoob (Hmong):

Tsab ntawv tshaj xo no muaj cov ntshiab lus tseem ceeb. Tej zaum tsab ntawv tshaj xo no muaj cov ntshiab lus tseem ceeb txog koj daim ntawv thov kev pab los yog koj qhov kev pab cuam hnuv ntawm Premera Blue Cross. Tej zaum muaj cov hnuv tseem ceeb uas sau rau hauv daim ntawv no. Tej zaum koj kuj yuav tau ua qee yam uas peb kom koj ua tsis pub dhau cov caij nyuog uas teev tseg rau hauv daim ntawv no mas koj thiaj yuav tau txais kev pab cuam kho mob los yog kev pab them tej nqi kho mob ntawd. Koj muaj cai kom lawv muab cov ntshiab lus no uas tau muab sau ua koj hom lus pub dawb rau koj. Hu rau 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Iloko (Ilocano):

Daytoy a Pakdaar ket naglaon iti Napateg nga Impormasion. Daytoy a pakdaar mabalin nga adda ket naglaon iti napateg nga impormasion maipanggep iti aplikasyonyo wenna coverage babaen iti Premera Blue Cross. Daytoy ket mabalin dagiti importante a petsa iti daytoy a pakdaar. Mabalin nga adda rumbeng nga aramidenyo nga addang sakbay dagiti partikular a naituding nga aldaw tapno mapagtalinaedyo ti coverage ti salun-atyto wenna tulong kadagiti gastos. Adda karbenganyo a mangala iti daytoy nga impormasion ken tulong iti bukodyo a pagsasao nga awan ti bayadanyo. Tumawag iti numero nga 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Italiano (Italian):

Questo avviso contiene informazioni importanti. Questo avviso può contenere informazioni importanti sulla tua domanda o copertura attraverso Premera Blue Cross. Potrebbero esserci date chiave in questo avviso. Potrebbe essere necessario un tuo intervento entro una scadenza determinata per consentirti di mantenere la tua copertura o sovvenzione. Hai il diritto di ottenere queste informazioni e assistenza nella tua lingua gratuitamente. Chiama 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

日本語 (Japanese):

この通知には重要な情報が含まれています。この通知には、Premera Blue Cross の申請または補償範囲に関する重要な情報が含まれている場合があります。この通知に記載されている可能性がある重要な日付をご確認ください。健康保険や有料サポートを維持するには、特定の期日までに行動を取らなければならない場合があります。ご希望の言語による情報とサポートが無料で提供されます。800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357)までお電話ください。

한국어 (Korean):

본 통지서에는 중요한 정보가 들어 있습니다. 즉 이 통지서는 귀하의 신청에 관하여 그리고 Premera Blue Cross 를 통한 커버리지에 관한 정보를 포함하고 있을 수 있습니다. 본 통지서에는 핵심이 되는 날짜들이 있을 수 있습니다. 귀하의 건강 커버리지를 계속 유지하거나 비용을 절감하기 위해서 일정한 마감일까지 조치를 취해야 할 필요가 있을 수 있습니다. 귀하의 이러한 정보와 도움을 귀하의 언어로 비용 부담없이 얻을 수 있는 권리가 있습니다. 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357) 로 전화하십시오.

ລາວ (Lao):

ແຈ້ງການນີ້ມີຂໍ້ມູນສໍາຄັນ. ແຈ້ງການນີ້ອາດຈະມີຂໍ້ມູນສໍາຄັນກ່ຽວກັບຄໍາຮ້ອງສະໝັກ ຫຼື ຄວາມຄົມຄອງປະກັນໄພຂອງທ່ານຜ່ານ Premera Blue Cross. ອາດຈະມີວັນທີ່ສໍາຄັນໃນແຈ້ງການນີ້. ທ່ານອາດຈະຈໍາເປັນຕ້ອງດໍາເນີນການຕາມກຳນົດ ເວລາສະເພາະເພື່ອຮັກສາຄວາມຄົມຄອງປະກັນສະພາບ ຫຼື ຄວາມຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອເວັ້ນເວີ້ ຄ່າໃຊ້ຈ່າຍຂອງທ່ານໄດ້. ທ່ານມີສິດໄດ້ຮັບຂໍ້ມູນນີ້ ແລະ ຄວາມຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອເປັນພາສາຂອງທ່ານໂດຍບໍ່ເສຍຄ່າ. ໃຫ້ໃບທາ 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

ភាសាខ្មែរ (Khmer):

សេចក្តីជូនដំណឹងនេះមានព័ត៌មានយ៉ាងសំខាន់។ សេចក្តីជូនដំណឹងនេះប្រហែលជាមានព័ត៌មានយ៉ាងសំខាន់អំពីទម្រង់បែបបទ ឬការរៀបចំរបស់អ្នកកាមរយ: Premera Blue Cross ។ ប្រហែលជាមាន កាលបរិច្ឆេទសំខាន់នៅក្នុងសេចក្តីជូនដំណឹងនេះ។ អ្នកប្រហែលជាត្រូវការបញ្ជាក់សមត្ថភាព ដល់កិច្ចការផ្ទៃក្នុងរបស់នានា ដើម្បីនឹងរក្សាទុកការធានារ៉ាប់រងអនាគតរបស់អ្នក ឬប្រាក់ដុល្លារចេញផ្លូវ។ អ្នកមានសិទ្ធិទទួលបានព័ត៌មាននេះ និងដុល្លារនៅក្នុងភាសារបស់អ្នកដោយមិនអស់លុយឡើយ។ សូមទូរស័ព្ទ 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357)។

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi):

ਇਸ ਨੋਟਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਖਾਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਹੈ. ਇਸ ਨੋਟਿਸ ਵਿਚ Premera Blue Cross ਵਲੋਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਕਵਰੇਜ ਅਤੇ ਅਰਜੀ ਬਾਰੇ ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ . ਇਸ ਨੋਟਿਸ ਨਵ ਖਾਸ ਤਾਰੀਖਾਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ. ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਜਸਰਤ ਕਵਰੇਜ ਰਿੱਖਣੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਜਾਂ ਓਸ ਦੀ ਲਾਗਤ ਜਵਿੱਚ ਮਦਦ ਦੇ ਇਕੱਠ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਅੰਤਮ ਤਾਰੀਖ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਢੁੱਝ ਖਾਸ ਕਰਮ ਚੁੱਕਣ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ,ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮੁਫਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੋਂ ਅਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਮਦਦ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਹੈ ,ਕਾਲ 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

فارسی (Farsi):

این اعلامیه حاوی اطلاعات مهم میباشد. این اعلامیه ممکن است حاوی اطلاعات مهم درباره فرم تقاضا و یا پوشش بیمه ای شما از طریق Premera Blue Cross باشد. به تاریخ های مهم در این اعلامیه توجه نمایید. شما ممکن است برای حفظ پوشش بیمه تان یا کمک در پرداخت هزینه های درمانی تان، به تاریخ های مشخصی برای انجام کارهای خاصی احتیاج داشته باشید. شما حق این را دارید که این اطلاعات و کمک را به زبان خود به طور رایگان دریافت نمایید. برای کسب اطلاعات با شماره 800-722-1471 (کلیر بران TTY تماس باشماره 800-842-5357) تماس برقرار نمایید.

Polskie (Polish):

To ogłoszenie może zawierać ważne informacje. To ogłoszenie może zawierać ważne informacje odnośnie Państwa wniosku lub zakresu świadczeń poprzez Premera Blue Cross. Prosimy zwrócić uwagę na kluczowe daty, które mogą być zawarte w tym ogłoszeniu aby nie przekroczyć terminów w przypadku utrzymania polisy ubezpieczeniowej lub pomocy związanej z kosztami. Macie Państwo prawo do bezpłatnej informacji we własnym języku. Zadzwońcie pod 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Português (Portuguese):

Este aviso contém informações importantes. Este aviso poderá conter informações importantes a respeito de sua aplicação ou cobertura por meio do Premera Blue Cross. Poderão existir datas importantes neste aviso. Talvez seja necessário que você tome providências dentro de determinados prazos para manter sua cobertura de saúde ou ajuda de custos. Você tem o direito de obter esta informação e ajuda em seu idioma e sem custos. Ligue para 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Română (Romanian):

Prezenta notificare conține informații importante. Această notificare poate conține informații importante privind cererea sau acoperirea asigurării dumneavoastră de sănătate prin Premera Blue Cross. Pot exista date cheie în această notificare. Este posibil să fie nevoie să acționați până la anumite termene limită pentru a vă menține acoperirea asigurării de sănătate sau asistența provizorie la costuri. Aveți dreptul de a obține gratuit aceste informații și ajutor în limba dumneavoastră. Sunați la 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Русский (Russian):

Настоящее уведомление содержит важную информацию. Это уведомление может содержать важную информацию о вашем заявлении или страховом покрытии через Premera Blue Cross. В настоящем уведомлении могут быть указаны ключевые даты. Вам, возможно, потребуется принять меры к определенным предельным срокам для сохранения страхового покрытия или помощи с расходами. Вы имеете право на бесплатное получение этой информации и помощь на вашем языке. Звоните по телефону 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Fa'asamoa (Samoan):

Atonu ua iai i lenei fa'asilasilaga ni fa'amatalaga e sili ona taua e tatau ona e malamalama i ai. O lenei fa'asilasilaga o se fesoasoani e fa'amatala atili i ai i le tulaga o le polokalame, Premera Blue Cross, ua e tau fia maua atu i ai. Fa'amolemole, ia e iloilo fa'alelei i aso fa'apitoa olo'o iai i lenei fa'asilasilaga taua. Masalo o le'a iai ni feau e tatau ona e faia ao le'i aulia le aso ua ta'ua i lenei fa'asilasilaga ina ia e iai pea ma maua fesoasoani mai ai i le polokalame a le Malo olo'o e iai i ai. Olo'o iai iate oe le aia tatau e maua atu i lenei fa'asilasilaga ma lenei fa'matalaga i legagana e te malamalama i ai aunoa ma se togiga tupe. Vili atu i le telefoni 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Español (Spanish):

Este Aviso contiene información importante. Es posible que este aviso contenga información importante acerca de su solicitud o cobertura a través de Premera Blue Cross. Es posible que haya fechas clave en este aviso. Es posible que deba tomar alguna medida antes de determinadas fechas para mantener su cobertura médica o ayuda con los costos. Usted tiene derecho a recibir esta información y ayuda en su idioma sin costo alguno. Llame al 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Tagalog (Tagalog):

Ang Paunawa na ito ay naglalaman ng mahalagang impormasyon tungkol sa iyong aplikasyon o pagsakop sa pamamagitan ng Premera Blue Cross. Maaaring may mga mahalagang petsa dito sa paunawa. Maaring mangailangan ka na magsagawa ng hakbang sa ilang mga itinakdang panahon upang mapanatili ang iyong pagsakop sa kalusugan o tulong na walang gastos. May karapatan ka na makakuha ng ganiitong impormasyon at tulong sa iyong wika ng walang gastos. Tumawag sa 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

ไทย (Thai):

ประกาศนี้มีข้อมูลสำคัญ ประกาศนี้อาจมีข้อมูลที่สำคัญเกี่ยวกับกาการสมัครหรือขอบเขตประกันสุขภาพของคุณผ่าน Premera Blue Cross และอาจมีกำหนดการในประกาศนี้ คุณอาจจะต้องดำเนินการภายในกำหนดระยะเวลาที่แน่นอนเพื่อจะรักษาการประกันสุขภาพของคุณหรือการช่วยเหลือที่มีค่าใช้จ่าย คุณมีสิทธิที่จะได้รับข้อมูลและความช่วยเหลือนี้ในภาษาของคุณโดยไม่มีค่าใช้จ่าย โทร 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357)

Український (Ukrainian):

Це повідомлення містить важливу інформацію. Це повідомлення може містити важливу інформацію про Ваше звернення щодо страховального покриття через Premera Blue Cross. Зверніть увагу на ключові дати, які можуть бути вказані у цьому повідомленні. Існує імовірність того, що Вам треба буде здійснити певні кроки у конкретні кінцеві строки для того, щоб зберегти Ваше медичне страхування або отримати фінансову допомогу. У Вас є право на отримання цієї інформації та допомоги безкоштовно на Вашій рідній мові. Дзвоніть за номером телефону 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).

Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese):

Thông báo này cung cấp thông tin quan trọng. Thông báo này có thông tin quan trọng về đơn xin tham gia hoặc hợp đồng bảo hiểm của quý vị qua chương trình Premera Blue Cross. Xin xem ngày quan trọng trong thông báo này. Quý vị có thể phải thực hiện theo thông báo đúng trong thời hạn để duy trì bảo hiểm sức khỏe hoặc được trợ giúp thêm về chi phí. Quý vị có quyền được biết thông tin này và được trợ giúp bằng ngôn ngữ của mình miễn phí. Xin gọi số 800-722-1471 (TTY: 800-842-5357).