

Essential Drug List

Medication alternatives



The Essential Drug List is a list of prescription medications approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). We've reviewed these drugs through our Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Process, which considers a drug's:

- Effectiveness
- Safety
- Similarity to other drugs within a therapeutic class
- Affordability

The Essential Drug List is a closed formulary, which means that only the prescription drugs on the list will be covered by the plan. Drugs that aren't covered have cost-effective, high-quality alternatives available. There may be a brand alternative, a generic equivalent or an over-the-counter (OTC) option. Brand-name drugs with a generic equivalent available aren't covered on the Essential Drug List.

Some common drugs that aren't on the Essential Drug List are shown below. Other preferred alternatives may also be available. Your coverage has limitations and exclusions. For details about what's covered and what's not, it's best to check your *Certificate/Evidence of Coverage or Summary Plan Description (SPD)*.

To view and search the complete Essential Drug List, visit anthem.com/pharmacyinformationanthem.com/pharmacyinformation. Information on dosage/strength options and any restrictions such as quantity limits, prior approval or step therapy requirements is available. Members can also call Member Services at the number on their member ID card.

What if a medication isn't on the Essential Drug List?

There may be times when a member's drug isn't on the Essential Drug List and the doctor thinks that another option isn't right for the member. The doctor can submit a request for an exception. This process, called prior authorization, requires the doctor to call the Member Services number on the member's ID card or go to anthem.com/pharmacyinformationanthem.com/pharmacyinformation to download and submit the prior authorization form.

For the most up-to-date information, please visit anthem.com/pharmacyinformationanthem.com/pharmacyinformation.

Drug class	Medications not on the Essential Drug List	Preferred alternatives
Acne – antibiotic	Acticlate, Doryx, Oracea, Solodyn, Vibramycin	Generic minocycline and doxycycline products
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	Focalin XR, Dextroamphetamine-amphet ER (generic Adderall XR)	Adderall XR, dexamethylphenidate ER
Allergies – antihistamines	Karbinal ER, Levocetirizine	desloratadine, Zytec solution OTC*, cetirizine*, fexofenadine*, loratadine*
Blood modifiers	Epogen, Mircera	Procrit, Aranesp
Cholesterol	Altoprev, Crestor, Liptruzet, Livalo, Vytorin, Zetia	simvastatin, atorvastatin, pravastatin, lovastatin
Diabetes – insulin	Afrezza, Apidra, Novolin, Novolog	Humulin, Humalog, Lantus, Levemir, Toujeo
Diabetes – biguanides	Fortamet, Glumetza, Riomet	Metformin, metformin ER (generic Glucophage XR)
Diabetes – DPP4 combo	Kazano, Kombiglyze XR	Janumet, Janumet XR, Jentadueto
Diabetes – DPP4s	Nesina, Onglyza	Tradjenta, Januvia
Diabetes – GLP1s	Tanzeum	Bydureon, Byetta, Trulicity & Victoza
Diabetes – SGLT2/combos	Glyxambi, Xigduo XR, Farxiga, Invokana/Invokamet	Jardiance, Synjardy
Diabetes – test strips	All except OneTouch & Accu-check	OneTouch & Accu-check
Erectile dysfunction	Levitra, Staxyn, Stendra	Cialis, Viagra
Gastrointestinal – PPIs	Dexilant, lansoprazole, pantoprazole	Nexium*, omeprazole
Growth hormone	Genotropin, Norditropin, Omnitrope, Saizen, Tev-Tropin, Zomacton	Humatrope, Nutropin AQ
Hepatitis C – genotype 1	Viekira Pak/XR, Olysio	Harvoni, Sovaldi, Epclusa
Immunologicals	Actemra, Cimzia, Cosentyx, Orencia, Otezla, Xeljanz	Enbrel, Humira, Simponi
Migraines	Frova, Relpax	Frovatriptan, rizatriptan, sumatriptan, zolmitriptan

Drug class	Medications not on the Essential Drug List	Preferred alternatives
Multiple sclerosis	Aubagio, Copaxone 20mg/ml, Extavia, Gilenya, Rebif, Tecfidera, Tysabri	Avonex, Betaseron, Copaxone 40mg/ml, Glatopa, Plegridy
Nasal steroids & combos	All Nasal Steroids including budesonide, Rhinocort Aqua Nasal Spray	Dymista, mometasone nasal spray, Nasal steroids OTC such as Rhinocort Allergy
Respiratory – anti-cholinergics	Incruse Ellipta, Tudorza Pressair	Spiriva
Respiratory – anti-inflammatory	Aerospan, Alvesco, Asmanex & Pulmicort	Arnuity Ellipta, Flovent, Qvar
Respiratory – SABAs	Proventil HFA, Ventolin HFA, Xopenex HFA	ProAir HFA, ProAir Respiclick
Sedative/hypnotics	Intermezzo, Rozerem, zolpidem ER	Eszopiclone, zolpidem
Testosterone – topical	AndroGel 1%, Axiron, Fortesta, Natesto, Testim, Testosterone Gel 1%, Vogelxo	AndroGel 1.62%
Thyroid	Synthroid, Tirosint	levothyroxine

*OTC - Available over the counter without a prescription required

Common medications not on the Essential Drug List (in alphabetical order)

Actemra	Diabetic test strips – all except OneTouch & Accu-check	Kazano	Orencia	Testim
Acticlate	Doryx	Kombiglyze XR	Viekira Pak/XR	Tev-Tropin
Aerospan	Epogen	Levitra	pantoprazole	Tirosint
Afrezza	Extavia	Levocetirizine	Proventil HFA	Tudorza Pressair
Altoprev	Farxiga	Liptruzet	Pulmicort	Tysabri
Alvesco	Focalin XR	Livalo	Rebif	Ventolin HFA
AndroGel 1%	Fortamet (brand and generic)	Mircera	Relpax	Vibramycin
Apidra	Fortesta	Nasal Steroids - all	Rhinocort Nasal Spray	Viekira Pak/XR
Asmanex	Frova	Natesto	Riomet	Vogelxo
Aubagio	Genotropin	Nesina	Rozerem	Vytorin
Axiron	Gilenya	Norditropin	Saizen	Xeljanz
budesonide	Glumetza (brand and generic)	Novolin	Solodyn	Xigduo XR
Cimzia	Glyxambi	Novolog	Staxyn	Xopenex HFA
Copaxone 20mg/ml	Incruse Ellipta	Olysio	Stendra	Zetia
Cosentyx	Intermezzo	Omnitrope	Synthroid	zolpidem ER
Crestor	Invokana/Invokamet	Onglyza	Tanzeum	Zomacton
Dexilant	Karbinal ER	Oracea	Tecfidera	

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