



How Anthem Chooses PPIs for the Drug List (Formulary)

This fact sheet answers some common questions about your PPI. It talks about changes to the list of covered drugs (called the formulary).

What is a PPI?

This is the name for a group of drugs. All the drugs in the PPI (proton pump inhibitor) group block the release of acid into the stomach. Here is a list of the PPI drugs:

- Aciphex® (rabeprazole)
- Nexium® (esomeprazole)
- Prevacid® (lansoprazole)
- Prilosec® and Prilosec OTC® (omeprazole)
- Protonix® (pantoprazole)
- Zegerid® (omeprazole/sodium bicarbonate)

What are PPIs used for?

These medications are for heartburn, ulcers, acid reflux, and GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease). People who have heartburn only once in awhile can be helped with antacids like Maalox, Mylanta, Rolaids and Tums or with H2 blockers like cimetidine, ranitidine, famotidine or nizatidine. If these drugs are not working well enough, PPIs may be an option.

Who decides which PPI drugs are covered?

The Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee decides which drugs are on the drug list (formulary).

- This committee includes an independent group of 30 doctors, pharmacists and specialists.
- These clinicians are not employees of Anthem. They give unbiased opinions about the benefits and risks of the drugs.

All PPIs work and have few side effects, but doses and cost vary.

Which PPIs are covered?

- Omeprazole (generic Prilosec®) 10 mg and omeprazole (generic Prilosec®) 20 mg are covered generics. The cost to you is lower.
- Nexium® and Prevacid® are the preferred brandname PPIs. The cost to you is moderate.
- Coverage for other PPIs varies by health plan. Sometimes the cost to you is higher. Sometimes health plans do not cover them.

Check with your plan to find out about your PPI.

How did Anthem decide which PPI drugs are covered?

Step 1 is the clinical review. In this step, the P&T Committee members compared all the PPI drugs. They looked at medical research and information from the FDA. Then they rated how well each drug works.

Step 2 started with the drug ratings from Step 1. Then the committee compared the use and cost of the drugs.

Step 3 began with the committee members discussing all this information. Then they decided which drugs go on the drug list (formulary). They also set the cost to you.

What did the research say about PPIs?

To decide which PPI drugs to put on the drug list (formulary), the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee members studied the research reports. Here is what they found:

- All PPI drugs work for heartburn and acid reflux. This includes moderate to severe GERD.
- There are no proven differences among the PPI drugs in how fast or how long they work.
- Most people have very few side effects. The most common are gastrointestinal problems (diarrhea, upset stomach), headache and dizziness.
- All PPIs have about the same side effects.
- Nexium and Prevacid are popular PPIs. Both drugs come as liquid, tablets or capsules.
- Three PPIs — Nexium® (esomeprazole), Prevacid® (lansoprazole) and Prilosec® (omeprazole) — are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for both children and adults.

See the chart on the next page for details about how the P&T Committee used the research to choose PPIs for Anthem's drug list (formulary).

This chart shows how Anthem's P&T Committee chooses PPIs for the drug list (formulary).

Where Can I Get More Information?

Effective Health Care Program

This website is from the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, a government research agency. It compares drugs and treatments.

WebMD

WebMD is a private company that provides health information. Anthem works with WebMD to provide information on health topics.

Medline Plus

Medline Plus brings together up-to-date information from government health care programs and health research. This page provides information on GERD.

National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse

This website is run by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. This page provides information on heartburn, acid reflux and GERD.

Familydoctor.org

This website is run by the American Academy of Family Physicians, a national medical association of family physicians. This page provides information on dyspepsia, or acid reflux disease.

Step 1 Clinical Review And Rating

Looked at the research on PPI drugs and found:

- All PPI drugs work for heartburn, acid reflux and GERD.
- There are no differences among the PPI drugs in how fast or how long they work.
- All PPIs have about the same side effects.

Looked at the FDA information and found:

- Three PPIs—Nexium® (esomeprazole), Prevacid® (lansoprazole) and Prilosec® (omeprazole) — are approved by the FDA for both children and adults.
- Nexium® and Prevacid® come as liquid, tablets or capsules.

Step 2 Amount Of Use & Cost Review

Started with the results of the clinical review

Looked at which drugs are prescribed and found:

- Nexium® and Prevacid® are two of the most popular PPIs.

Looked at which drugs are prescribed and found:

- For Anthem, omeprazole (generic Prilosec®) 10 mg and 20 mg, Nexium® and Prevacid® are the least costly PPIs.

Step 3 Set Drug Coverage Level

Discussed all the information from Steps 1 and 2. Decided which drugs go on the drug list (formulary) and set the drug coverage level.

LOWER COST TO YOU	MODERATE COST TO YOU	HIGHER COST TO YOU
Omeprazole (generic Prilosec®) 10 mg and 20 mg	Nexium® and Prevacid®	Aciphex®, Prilosec®, Protonix® and Zegerid®
Drugs that work well and have lower cost	Drugs that work well and have moderate cost	Drugs that work the same as other drugs but have higher cost

The cost to you for omeprazole (generic Prilosec®) 40 mg and pantoprazole (generic Protonix®) varies by plan.