



MASSACHUSETTS

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Pharmacy Medical Policy Bisphosphonate, Oral

Table of Contents

- [Policy: Commercial](#)
- [Information Pertaining to All Policies](#)
- [Endnotes](#)
- [Policy: Medicare](#)
- [References](#)
- [Forms](#)
- [Policy History](#)

Policy Number: 058

BCBSA Reference Number: None

Related Policies

- Quality Care Dosing guidelines apply to the following medications and can be found in Medical Policy [#621](#)

Policy

Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, and Indemnity

Note: All requests for outpatient retail pharmacy for indications listed and not listed on the medical policy guidelines may be submitted to BCBSMA Clinical Pharmacy Operations by completing the Prior Authorization Form on the last page of this document. Physicians may also call BCBSMA Pharmacy Operations department at (800)366-7778 to request a prior authorization/formulary exception verbally. Physicians may also submit requests for retail pharmacy exceptions via the web using Express PA which can be found on the BCBSMA provider portal or directly on the web at <https://provider.express-path.com>. Patients must have pharmacy benefits under their subscriber certificates.

Please refer to the chart below for the formulary status of the medications affected by this policy.

Drug	Formulary Information	
	Standard	
	Formulary Status	
STEP 1		
Alendronate	Covered	
Fosamax® oral solution (alendronate)		
Ibandronate		
Risedronate		
Risedronate DR		
STEP 2		

Actonel® (risedronate)	Prior use of Step 1 Required
STEP 3	
Atelvia™* (risedronate)	Prior use of Step 1 and Step 2 required
Binosto™* (alendronate)	
Boniva®* (ibandronate)	
Fosamax® tablets* (alendronate)	
Fosamax® Plus D* (alendronate / cholecalciferol)	

*Non formulary medications are covered when a formulary exception request is submitted to BCBSMA Pharmacy Operations and step criteria below are met.

We cover the oral bisphosphonate medications listed in the chart above for new starts* in the following stepped approach¹.

*New start is defined as no previous paid claim for the requested medication within the past 130 days.

Step 1: Step 1 medications will be covered without prior authorization.

Step 2: Step 2 medications may be covered when **one** of the following criteria is met:

- There must be evidence of a BCBSMA paid claim or physician documented use** by the patient of a step 1 drug within the previous 130 days.

OR

- There must be evidence of a BCBSMA paid claim by the patient of a step 2 drug within the previous 130 days.

Step 3: Step 3 medications may be covered when **one** of the following criteria is met:

- There must be evidence of a BCBSMA paid claim or physician documented use** by the patient of a step 1 drug and step 2 drug within the previous 130 days.

OR

- There must be evidence of a BCBSMA paid claim by the patient of a step 3 drug within the previous 130 days.

**Requests based exclusively on the use of samples will not meet coverage criteria for exception. Additional clinical information demonstrating medical necessity of the desired medication must be submitted by the requesting prescriber for review.

We do not cover drugs listed in the above chart when the above step therapy criteria are not met.

Individual Consideration

All our medical policies are written for the majority of people with a given condition. Each policy is based on medical science. For many of our medical policies, each individual's unique clinical circumstances may be considered in light of current scientific literature. Physicians may send relevant clinical information for individual patients for consideration to:

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Pharmacy Operations Department
25 Technology Place
Hingham, MA 02043
Tel: 1-800-366-7778
Fax: 1-800-583-6289

Managed Care Authorization Instructions

- Physicians may call BCBSMA Pharmacy Operations department to request a review for prior authorization for patients who do not meet the step-therapy criteria at the point of sale.

Pharmacy Operations: (800) 366-7778

- Physicians may also fax or mail the attached form to the address above. The Formulary Exception/Prior Authorization form is included as part of this document for physicians to submit for patients who do not meet the step therapy criteria at the point of sale.
- Physicians may also submit requests for retail pharmacy exceptions via the web using Express PAtH which can be found on the BCBSMA provider portal or directly on the web at <https://provider.express-path.com>.

PPO and Indemnity Authorization Instructions

- Physicians may call BCBSMA Pharmacy Operations department to request a review for prior authorization for patients who do not meet the step-therapy criteria at the point of sale.
Pharmacy Operations: (800) 366-7778
- Physicians may also fax or mail the attached form to the address above. The Formulary Exception/Prior Authorization form is included as part of this document for physicians to submit for patients who do not meet the step therapy criteria at the point of sale.
- Physicians may also submit requests for retail pharmacy exceptions via the web using Express PAtH which can be found on the BCBSMA provider portal or directly on the web at <https://provider.express-path.com>.

Policy History

Date	Action
6/2017	Updated address for Pharmacy Operations.
1/2016	Updated to add Risedronate DR & Risedronate to step1.
1/2014	Updated ExpressPAtH language and remove Blue Value.
9/2012	Updated 9/2012 to remove Actonel Plus Calcium.
8/2012	Updated to add ibandronate to Step 1 and coverage criteria for the new FDA approved medication Binosto™.
11/2011-4/2012	Medical policy ICD 10 remediation: Formatting, editing and coding updates. No changes to policy statements.
3/2011	Updated to include coverage criteria for new FDA approved medication Atelvia™.
2/2010	Updated to include formulary status change and Express PA info.
9/2009	Policy updated to change 180 day look back period to 130 days and to remove Medicare Part D criteria from Medical Policy.
9/1/2008	New policy, effective 9/1/2008, describing covered and non-covered indications.

References

1. Actonel® [package insert]. Cincinnati, OH: Procter & Gamble Pharmaceuticals; 2008.
2. Boniva® [package insert]. Nutley, NJ: Roche Pharmaceuticals; 2006.
3. Fosamax® [package insert]. Whitehouse Station, NJ: Merck & Co.; 2008.
4. Atelvia™ [package insert]. North Norwich, NY: Norwich Pharmaceuticals, Inc. 2011.

Endnotes

1. Based on the recommendations of the BCBSMA Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee meeting on 5/13/2008.

To request prior authorization using the Massachusetts Standard Form for Medication Prior Authorization Requests (eForm), click the link below:

http://www.bluecrossma.com/common/en_US/medical_policies/023%20E%20Form%20medication%20prior%20auth%20instruction%20prn.pdf