



Regence

Oregon and Utah



Regence

Idaho and select counties of Washington

Independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Medication Policy Manual

Policy No: dru483

Topic: Evzio®, naloxone hydrochloride autoinjector

Date of Origin: January 13, 2017

Committee Approval Date: December 8, 2017

Next Review Date: December 2018

Effective Date: February 1, 2018

IMPORTANT REMINDER

This Medication Policy has been developed through consideration of medical necessity, generally accepted standards of medical practice, and review of medical literature and government approval status.

Benefit determinations should be based in all cases on the applicable contract language. To the extent there are any conflicts between these guidelines and the contract language, the contract language will control.

The purpose of Medication Policy is to provide a guide to coverage. Medication Policy is not intended to dictate to providers how to practice medicine. Providers are expected to exercise their medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care.

Description

Naloxone HCl autoinjector (Evzio) is an opioid antagonist used for the emergency treatment of known or suspected opioid overdose as manifested by respiratory and/or central nervous system depression.

Policy/Criteria

- I. Most contracts require pre-authorization approval of naloxone HCl autoinjector (Evzio) prior to coverage. Naloxone HCl autoinjector (Evzio) may be considered medically necessary when there is clinical documentation of visual or functional impairment which makes the patient or patient's caretaker unable to use alternative mechanisms of naloxone delivery (as specified in Table 1).

Please note: No pre-authorization is required for the lower cost naloxone formulations listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Lower cost naloxone products
Naloxone HCl nasal spray (Narcan, others)
Naloxone HCl intramuscular/subcutaneous injectable solution [generic]

- II. Regence pharmacy services considers naloxone HCl injection (Evzio) to be a self-administered medication.
- III. Use of naloxone HCl autoinjectors (Evzio) is considered investigational when used for all other conditions other than the immediate reversal of suspected or known opioid overdose.

Position Statement

Summary

- Naloxone HCl blocks the actions of opioid medications thereby reversing the effects, including respiratory depression.
- Since its approval, naloxone HCl has been used widely by hospitals and first responder personnel. Although there are no high quality randomized, controlled trials with this medication, there is vast clinical experience with naloxone HCl as a narcotic reversal agent.^[1]
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain, recommend that clinicians offer naloxone and overdose prevention education to both patients and their household members if they have risk factors for opioid overdose. These risk factors include:^[2]
 - * Opioid dosage exceeding 50 morphine milligram equivalents per day
 - * History of overdose
 - * History of substance use disorder
 - * Concurrent benzodiazepine use.
- The World Health Organization guidelines concluded that naloxone is effective when delivered through intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous, and intranasal routes of administration. These guidelines did not find evidence of differences between the intranasal naloxone and intramuscular naloxone for the treatment of opioid overdose.^[3]

- Formulations such as intramuscular/subcutaneous naloxone injectable solution and naloxone HCL nasal spray (Narcan, others), provide the best value. Naloxone HCl autoinjector (Evzio) has not been proven to be safer or more effective than naloxone HCl through other routes of administration including intramuscular/subcutaneous injections or as an intranasal spray, but is more costly. [3]
- The recommended dose of naloxone HCl autoinjector (Evzio) is one prefilled injection immediately at the time of emergency therapy. Additional doses can be administered every 2 to 3 minutes following the initial injection until emergency medical assistance arrives.[4]
- Naloxone HCl autoinjector (Evzio) should not be used as a substitute for seeking immediate emergency care in the setting of an opioid overdose.
- There are multiple formulations of naloxone for administration by laypersons for take-home use. [5] More information is available at:
<http://prescribetoprevent.org/pharmacists/formulations/>

Clinical Efficacy

- Naloxone HCl has been widely used in its intravenous, injectable, and intranasal form since its approval and there is extensive experience with this medication in clinical practice.[1]
- Naloxone HCl autoinjector (Evzio) was approved by demonstrating that it produced similar drug levels in patients as injectable naloxone. [4]

Investigational Uses

- There are no high-quality published clinical trials evaluating the safety or efficacy of naloxone HCl for indications other than the immediate reversal of opioid withdrawal.

Cross References
Fentanyl-containing medications [Actiq®, Abstral®, Fentora®, fentanyl citrate oral transmucosal lozenges (generic), Lazanda®, Onsolis®, Subsys®] Medication Policy Manual, Policy No. dru073
Extended-release (ER) Opioid Medication Products for Pain, Medication Policy Manual, Policy No. dru515
Immediate-release (IR) Opioid Medication Products for Pain, Medication Policy Manual, Policy No. dru516

Codes	Number	Description
N/A		None

References

1. American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM). National Practice Guideline for the use of medications in the treatment of addiction involving opioid use. June 1, 2015. [cited 6/8/2016]; Available from: <http://www.asam.org/quality-practice/guidelines-and-consensus-documents>
2. Dowell, D, Haegerich, TM, Chou, R. CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain - United States, 2016. *MMWR Recomm Rep*. 2016 Mar 18;65(1):1-49. PMID: 26987082
3. World Health Organization. Community Management of opioid overdose. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO; 2014
4. Evzio™ (naloxone injection) autoinjector for intramuscular or subcutaneous use [package insert]. Richmond, VA: kaleo, Inc.; April 2014
5. Prescribe to Prevent. Prescribe Naloxone, Save a Life. Accessed on 10/17/2017. Available at: <http://prescribetoprevent.org/>

Revision History

Revision Date	Revision Summary
12/08/2017	No change to coverage criteria with this annual update
01/13/2017	New policy (effective 1/13/17)