

## Clinical Policy: Carbidopa/Levodopa ER Capsules (Rytary)

Reference Number: ERX.NPA.41

Effective Date: 12.01.15

Last Review Date: 08.22

Line of Business: Commercial, Medicaid

[Revision Log](#)

See **Important Reminder** at the end of this policy for important regulatory and legal information.

### Description

Carbidopa/levodopa extended-release capsules (Rytary®) is a combination of an aromatic amino acid decarboxylation inhibitor (carbidopa) and an aromatic amino acid (levodopa).

### FDA Approved Indication(s)

Rytary is indicated for the treatment of Parkinson's disease (PD), post-encephalitic parkinsonism, and parkinsonism that may follow carbon monoxide intoxication or manganese intoxication.

### Policy/Criteria

*Provider must submit documentation (such as office chart notes, lab results or other clinical information) supporting that member has met all approval criteria.*

*Health plan approved formularies should be reviewed for all coverage determinations. Requirements to use preferred alternative agents apply only when such requirements align with the health plan approved formulary.*

It is the policy of health plans affiliated with Envolve Pharmacy Solutions™ that Rytary is **medically necessary** when the following criteria are met:

#### I. Initial Approval Criteria

##### A. Parkinson's Disease or Parkinsonism (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of PD or parkinsonism;
2. Age  $\geq$  18 years;
3. Documented intolerance or contraindication\* to carbidopa/levodopa sustained release tablets (generic Sinemet® CR) that would not apply to Rytary;  
*\*Examples of acceptable intolerance or contraindications include inability to swallow pills or intolerance or contraindications to excipients in carbidopa/levodopa sustained released tablets. Note: Failure of carbidopa/levodopa sustained released tablets is NOT an acceptable rationale for use of Rytary over Sinemet CR.*
4. Dose does not exceed carbidopa 612.5 mg/levodopa 2,450 mg per day.

**Approval duration: 12 months**

##### B. Other diagnoses/indications

1. Refer to ERX.PA.01 if diagnosis is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized).

#### II. Continued Therapy

##### A. Parkinson's Disease or Parkinsonism (must meet all):

1. Currently receiving medication via a health plan affiliated with Envolve Pharmacy Solutions or member has previously met initial approval criteria;
2. Member is responding positively to therapy;
3. If request is for a dose increase, new dose does not exceed carbidopa 612.5 mg/levodopa 2,450 mg per day.

**Approval duration: 12 months**

##### B. Other diagnoses/indications (must meet 1 or 2):

1. Currently receiving medication via a health plan affiliated with Envolve Pharmacy Solutions and documentation supports positive response to therapy.

**Approval duration: Duration of request or 12 months (whichever is less); or**

2. Refer to ERX.PA.01 if diagnosis is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized).

**III. Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized:**

- A. Non-FDA approved indications, which are not addressed in this policy, unless there is sufficient documentation of efficacy and safety according to the off-label use policy – ERX.PA.01 or evidence of coverage documents.

**IV. Appendices/General Information**

*Appendix A: Abbreviation/Acronym Key*

FDA: Food and Drug Administration  
 MAO: monoamine oxidase  
 PD: Parkinson’s disease

*Appendix B: Therapeutic Alternatives*

*This table provides a listing of preferred alternative therapy recommended in the approval criteria. The drugs listed here may not be a formulary agent and may require prior authorization.*

Drug Name	Dosing Regimen	Dose Limit/ Maximum Dose
carbidopa/levodopa sustained released tablets (Sinemet CR)	<p>Patients not currently receiving levodopa:                      Initial: carbidopa 50 mg/levodopa 200 mg PO BID.</p> <p>Patients currently receiving levodopa: <i>Note: Levodopa must be discontinued at least 12 hours before starting carbidopa/levodopa therapy.</i>                      Initial: Carbidopa/levodopa sustained-release should be substituted at a dosage that will provide approximately 25% of the previous levodopa dosage; usual initial dose in mild to moderate disease is carbidopa 50 mg/levodopa 200 mg BID.</p> <p>Patients converting from immediate-release (IR) formulation to controlled release:                      Initial: Dosage should be substituted at an amount that provides ~10% more of levodopa/day, depending on clinical response, dosage may need to be increased to provide up to 30% more levodopa/day. Total calculated dosage is administered in divided doses at intervals ranging from 4 to 8 hours during waking hours. An interval of at least 3 days between dosage adjustments is recommended.</p>	<p>Most patients are adequately controlled on doses that provide up to 1,600 mg/day of levodopa.</p>

*Therapeutic alternatives are listed as Brand name® (generic) when the drug is available by brand name only and generic (Brand name®) when the drug is available by both brand and generic.*

*Appendix C: Contraindications/Boxed Warnings*

- Contraindication(s): concomitant use of nonselective monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitor (e.g., phenelzine, tranylcypromine) or have recently (within 2 weeks) taken a nonselective MAO inhibitor.
- Boxed warning(s): none reported

**V. Dosage and Administration**

Indication	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
PD; parkinsonism	Levodopa-naïve patients: Starting dose is 23.75 mg/95 mg PO TID; may increase to 36.25 mg/145 mg TID on the fourth day of	Carbidopa 612.5 mg /levodopa

Indication	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
	<p>treatment; may increase dose up to carbidopa 97.5 mg/levodopa 390 mg TID; frequency of dosing may be increased to a maximum of 5 times daily if needed and tolerated.</p> <p>Patients converting from IR carbidopa/levodopa to ER carbidopa-levodopa: The dosages of other carbidopa and levodopa products are not interchangeable on a 1:1 basis with the dosages of Rytary. Initial dose based off of total current daily dose of levodopa in IR carbidopa/levodopa (frequency of dosing may be increased to a maximum of 5 times daily if needed and tolerated).</p>	2450 mg per day

**VI. Product Availability**

ER capsules: carbidopa/levodopa 23.75 mg/95 mg, 36.25 mg/145 mg, 48.75 mg/195 mg, 61.25 mg/245 mg

**VII. References**

1. Rytary Prescribing Information. Hayward, CA: Impax Laboratories; December 2019. Available at: <https://rytary.com>. Accessed March 25, 2022.
2. Carbidopa/Levodopa Extended-Release Tablets Prescribing Information. Durham, NC: Accord Healthcare, Inc.; September 2014. Available at <https://dailymed.nlm.nih.gov/dailymed/drugInfo.cfm?setid=5217a6ec-cc26-4acc-b2da-17f6545c3b60>. Accessed March 25, 2022.
3. Clinical Pharmacology [database online]. Tampa, FL: Gold Standard, Inc.; 2021. Available at: <http://www.clinicalpharmacology-ip.com/>. Accessed March 25, 2022.
4. Miyasaki J, Martin W, Suchowesky O. Practice parameter: Initiation of treatment for Parkinson's disease: (an evidence-based review). Report of the Quality Standards Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology. *Neurology*. 2002; 58(1):11-17.
5. Fox SH, Katzenschlager R, Lim S, et al. International Parkinson and Movement Disorder Society evidence-based medicine review: Update on treatments for the motor symptoms of Parkinson's disease. *Movement Disorders*; 2018. Published online in Wiley Online Library. DOI: 10.1002/mds.27372.
6. Pringsheim T, Day GS, Smith DB, et al. Dopaminergic therapy for motor symptoms in early Parkinson disease practice guideline summary: a report of the AAN guideline subcommittee. *Neurology* 2021;97:942-957.

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	P&T Approval Date
3Q 2018 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	05.14.18	08.18
3Q 2019 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	04.17.19	08.19
3Q 2020 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	04.27.20	08.20
3Q 2021 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	03.23.21	08.21
3Q 2022 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	03.25.22	08.22

**Important Reminder**

This clinical policy has been developed by appropriately experienced and licensed health care professionals based on a review and consideration of currently available generally accepted standards of

medical practice; peer-reviewed medical literature; government agency/program approval status; evidence-based guidelines and positions of leading national health professional organizations; views of physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas affected by this clinical policy; and other available clinical information.

This Clinical Policy is not intended to dictate to providers how to practice medicine, nor does it constitute a contract or guarantee regarding payment or results. Providers are expected to exercise professional medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care, and are solely responsible for the medical advice and treatment of members.

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