



### NEW INFORMATION

#### Coverage of Medications for the Treatment of Multiple Sclerosis

Effective January 2, 2019, NIHB will list the medications listed below for multiple sclerosis (MS) as limited use benefits with criteria. Previously, these medications were considered on a case-by-case exception basis. Coverage criteria for these medications can be found in the [NIHB Drug Benefit List](#).

Brand Name	Active Ingredient
Avonex	interferon beta-1a
Betaseron	interferon beta-1b
Rebif	interferon beta-1a
Extavia	interferon beta-1b
Plegridy	peginterferon beta-1a
Copaxone	glatiramer acetate
Glatect	glatiramer acetate
Tecfidera	dimethyl fumarate
Aubagio	teriflunomide
Gilenya	fingolimod
Lemtrada	alemtuzumab

#### Tresiba Open Benefit

Effective September 18, 2018, NIHB listed the Tresiba (insulin degludec) DINs below as Open Benefit. This change adds another option for once-daily insulin therapy for adults with diabetes.

DIN	Brand Name
02467879	Tresiba Flextouch 100IU/ML (Prefilled Pen)
02467887	Tresiba Flextouch 200IU/ML (Prefilled Pen)

#### Benzodiazepine Dose Limit Policy

For client safety, the NIHB Program limits the maximum dose of benzodiazepines that may be reimbursed per month for a client. Since March 2013, the Program has gradually been lowering the dose limit, which is currently at 40 mg of diazepam equivalents (DEQ) per day. This dose limit is being further reduced to 30 mg DEQ per day, implemented region-by-region. Additionally, the NIHB Program has a 30-day maximum dispense policy for all benzodiazepines.

Implementation dates for the new 30 mg dose limit are as follows:

- September 17, 2018: Saskatchewan and Quebec
- November 13, 2018: Atlantic Region
- February 11, 2019: Alberta Region

Implementation dates for other regions will be announced in future newsletters.

Providers with clients who exceed the limit will need to call the Drug Exception Centre for prior approval. Abrupt discontinuation of benzodiazepines is not advised. For guidance on tapering and a chart of dose equivalencies, please see Appendix B-6 of the [2010 Canadian Guideline for Safe and Effective Use of Opioids for Chronic Non-Cancer Pain](#).

#### Coverage of Contraceptives

NIHB is expanding program coverage of contraceptives with the following additions to the Drug Benefit List:

- Cervical cap (pDIN 09991642)
- Acid-buffering lactic acid gels intended for use with diaphragms and cervical caps including:
  - Caya contraceptive gel (pDIN 09991643)
  - Contragel green gel (pDIN 09991644)
- Nonoxynol-9 film, sponge and foam (subject to market availability) including:
  - Today Sponge (pDIN 09991647)
  - VCF Foam vaginal contraceptive (pDIN 09991645)
  - VCF Vaginal contraceptive Film (pDIN 09991646)
- Female condoms (pDIN 09991648)
- Quantity limits have been removed from Mirena, and Jaydess, as well as all copper intrauterine devices.

Public Health Agency of Canada and Society of Obstetrician and Gynecologist guidelines note that nonoxynol-9 has been linked to increased susceptibility to HIV infections, but has not been shown to enhance the protective effect of condoms. As such, condoms lubricated with nonoxynol-9 will be delisted effective November 7, 2018. All other listed condoms will remain as open benefits.

#### Pharmacist-Initiated Treatment – Update to List of Medications and Conditions

NIHB has reviewed and updated the list of medications and conditions which are eligible for reimbursement when prescribed or recommended by pharmacists. New eligible treatments are listed below. The full list is available in the [NIHB Provider Guide for Pharmacy Benefits](#). Also see the Reminders section below.

Condition	Eligible Schedule 2, 3 and unscheduled products
Anaphylaxis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Epinephrine auto-injectors listed AHFS class 12:12.12 of the NIHB DBL</li> </ul>

Condition	Eligible Schedule 2, 3 and unscheduled products
Contraceptives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condoms listed in AHFS class 32:00.00 of the NIHB DBL</li> <li>• Diaphragms and cervical caps listed in AHFS class 32:00.00 of the NIHB DBL</li> <li>• Lactic acid contraceptive gels listed in AHFS class 32:00.00 of the NIHB DBL</li> <li>• Spermicidal foams, films and sponges listed in AHFS class 32:00.00 of the NIHB DBL</li> </ul>

## REMINDERS

### Coverage of Pharmacy Benefits When Prescribed or Recommended by a Pharmacist

The NIHB Program accepts prescriptions for Schedule 1 drugs that have been written in accordance with federal and provincial legislation from any licensed health professional, including pharmacists.

In addition, NIHB accepts both prescriptions and documented pharmacist recommendations for Schedule 2, 3, and unscheduled products included under the Pharmacist-Initiated Treatment Policy. Important: under this policy, pharmacists do not need to have regulated prescribing authority in order for their documented recommendations to be accepted for the purposes of reimbursement.

### Temporary Coverage for Auvi-Q (Epinephrine Auto-Injector)

In response to the ongoing EpiPen shortage, Health Canada has allowed the import of AUVI-Q epinephrine auto-injectors from the United States. AUVI-Q is temporarily covered as an open benefit through the NIHB Program. AUVI-Q can be billed when EpiPen is not available due to supply shortage.

Health Canada has assigned the following temporary product identification numbers (PIN) which must be used for claim submissions:

PIN	Product
02480379	AUVI-Q® 0.3 mg/0.3mL epinephrine auto-injector
02480360	AUVI-Q® 0.15 mg/0.15mL epinephrine auto-injector

AUVI-Q is packaged in a box that contains 2 auto-injectors plus a training device. The correct quantity for claim submissions is the number of auto-injectors dispensed.

Further information can be found in Health Canada's *Dear Healthcare Professional Letter*: [healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2018/67658a-eng.php](http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2018/67658a-eng.php)

## Billing Buprenorphine/naloxone and Slow-Release Morphine for Opioid Use Disorder

Buprenorphine/naloxone and slow-release morphine for opioid use disorder must be billed per dispense, not per dose. If a client is receiving one witnessed dose plus carries, providers may submit one claim for the witnessed dose and one claim for carries. For example, if a client is receiving one witnessed dose with three carries, this could be billed as two claims.

For providers who are shipping buprenorphine/naloxone for witnessing and distribution outside of the pharmacy, e.g. to remote communities, a single claim per dispense should be submitted.

## Remittance of Cheque Payments

When submitting payments to Express Scripts Canada with respect to the NIHB Program, providers are reminded to make their **cheques payable** to the **Receiver General for Canada**. Addressing the incorrect payee will lead to delays in processing and closing of the file.

## NIHB PROGRAM AND EXPRESS SCRIPTS CANADA CONTACT INFORMATION

### EXPRESS SCRIPTS CANADA

#### Provider Claims Processing Call Centre

Please have your Provider Number readily available

1-888-511-4666

#### Pharmacy Extended Hours

Monday to Friday:  
6:30 a.m. to midnight Eastern Time  
Saturday, Sunday and Statutory Holidays:  
8 a.m. to midnight Eastern Time

#### MS&E Extended Hours

Monday to Friday:  
6:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Eastern Time  
Excluding Statutory Holidays

#### Pharmacy and MS&E Claims

##### Mail Pharmacy claims to:

Express Scripts Canada  
NIHB Pharmacy Claims  
P.O. Box 1353, Station K,  
Toronto, ON M4P 3J4

##### Mail MS&E claims to:

Express Scripts Canada  
NIHB MS&E Claims  
P.O. Box 1365, Station K,  
Toronto, ON M4P 3J4

##### Fax Pharmacy and MS&E claims to:

1-888-249-6098

#### Provider Relations Department

##### Fax completed provider agreements to:

1-855-622-0669

#### Other Correspondence

##### Mail to:

Express Scripts Canada  
5770 Hurontario St., 10<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
Mississauga, ON L5R 3G5

### NIHB PROGRAM

#### PHARMACY BENEFITS

#### Drug Exception Centre (DEC)

##### PRIOR APPROVALS

##### Pharmacy Benefits

1-800-580-0950 (English)

1-800-281-5027 (French)

Fax No.: 1-877-789-4379

#### First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Regional Offices

##### PRIOR APPROVALS

##### MS&E Benefits

Alberta	1-800-232-7301
Atlantic	1-800-565-3294
Manitoba	1-800-665-8507
Northwest Territories/Nunavut/Yukon	1-888-332-9222
Ontario	1-800-881-3921
Quebec	1-877-483-1575
Saskatchewan	1-866-885-3933

#### FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY

##### PRIOR APPROVALS

British Columbia\* (fax number) 1-888-299-9222

##### INQUIRIES

British Columbia\* 1-800-317-7878

*\*For First Nation residents in British Columbia only.  
For non-residents and Inuit, contact the Alberta region.*

### NIHB Forms

Download from the NIHB Claims Services Provider Website or contact the Provider Claims Processing Call Centre.