

Essential Drug List



Medication alternatives

The Essential Drug List is a list of prescription medications approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). We've reviewed these drugs through our Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Process, which considers a drug's:

- Effectiveness
- Safety
- Similarity to other drugs within a therapeutic class
- Affordability

The Essential Drug List is a closed formulary, which means that only the prescription drugs on the list will be covered by the plan. Drugs that aren't covered have cost-effective, high-quality alternatives available. There may be a brand alternative, a generic equivalent or an over-the-counter (OTC) option. Brand-name drugs with a generic equivalent available aren't covered on the Essential Drug List.

Some common drugs that aren't on the Essential Drug List are shown below. Other preferred alternatives may also be available. Please note, exclusions and limitations may apply. For details about what's covered and what's not, it's best to check the Certificate/Evidence of Coverage or Summary Plan Description (SPD).

To view and search the complete Essential Drug List, members should log in at [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com) and choose **Prescription Benefits**. Information on dosage/strength options and any restrictions such as quantity limits, prior approval or step therapy requirements is available. Members can also call Member Services at the number on their ID card.

What if a medication isn't on the Essential Drug List?

There may be times when a member's drug isn't on the Essential Drug List. If the covered alternative options aren't right for a member, their doctor can submit a request for an exception. This process, called prior authorization, requires the doctor to call the Member Services number on the member's ID card or go to [anthem.com/pharmacyinformation](https://www.anthem.com/pharmacyinformation) to download and submit the prior authorization form.

Doctors can also submit prior authorizations electronically, which requires less processing time and possible real-time approval so members can fill their prescriptions right away.

For the most up-to-date information, members should log in at [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com) and choose Prescription Benefits.

Drug class	Medications not on the Essential Drug List	Preferred alternatives
Acne - antibiotic	Acticlate, Doryx, Oracea (brand and generic), Seysara, Solodyn, Vibramycin, Ximino ER	Generic minocycline and doxycycline products
Allergic Reaction Treatment	Adrenaclick, Auvi-Q, EpiPen, EpiPen JR	epinephrine auto-injector (Authorized generic EpiPen from Mylan)
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	Focalin XR	Adderall XR, dexamethylphenidate ER, Vyvanse
Allergies - antihistamines	Karbinal ER, levocetirizine	desloratadine, Zytec solution OTC*, cetirizine* fexofenadine*, loratadine*
Blood modifiers	Epogen, Mircera	Procrit, Aranesp, Retacrit
Cholesterol	Altoprev, Crestor, Livalo	atorvastatin, ezetimibe, ezetimibe-simvastatin, lovastatin, pravastatin, rosuvastatin, simvastatin
Diabetes - insulin	Admelog, Basaglar, Afrezza, Apidra, Fiasp, Novolin, Novolog, Tresiba	Humulin, Humalog, Insulin Lispro, Lantus, Levemir, Toujeo
Diabetes - biguanides	Fortamet (brand and generic), Glumetza (brand and generic), Riomet	metformin, metformin ER (generic Glucophage XR)
Diabetes - DPP4 combo	Kazano, Kombiglyze XR	Janumet/XR, Jentadueto
Diabetes - DPP4s	Nesina, Onglyza	Tradjenta, Januvia
Diabetes - GLP1s	Tanzeum	Bydureon, Byetta, Ozempic, Trulicity, Victoza
Diabetes - SGLT2/combos	Glyxambi, Invokana, Invokamet/XR, Qtern, Segluromet, Steglatro, Steglujan	Farxiga, Jardiance, Synjardy/XR, Xigduo XR
Diabetes - test strips	All except OneTouch & Accu-chek	OneTouch & Accu-chek
Erectile dysfunction	Cialis, Levitra, Staxyn, Stendra, Viagra	sildenafil citrate (generic Viagra), tadalafil (generic Cialis)

Drug class	Medications not on the Essential Drug List	Preferred alternatives
Gastrointestinal – PPIs	Aciphex (brand and generic), Nexium (brand and generic), Prevacid/ODT (brand and generic), Protonix	Nexium*, omeprazole, pantoprazole
Growth hormone	Genotropin, Norditropin, Omnitrope, Saizen, Zomacton	Humatrope, Nutropin AQ
Hepatitis C – genotype 1	Daklinza, Epclusa, Harvoni, Pegasys, Sovaldi, Viekira Pak/XR, Olysio	Mavyret
Immunologicals	Actemra, Cimzia, Ilumya, Kevzara, Orencia	Cosentyx, Enbrel, Humira, Rinvoq, Simponi, Stelara, Skyrizi, Tremfya
Infliximab Products	Inflectra, Renflexis	Remicade
Migraines	Frova, Relpax	rizatriptan, sumatriptan, zolmitriptan
Multiple sclerosis	Tysabri	Avonex, Betaseron, Copaxone, Extavia, Gilenya, glatiramer, glatopa, Plegridy, Rebif, Tecfidera
Nasal steroids & combos	Beconase AQ, flunisolide, fluticasone, Nasonex, Omnaris, Qnasl/children, Xhance, Zetonna	OTC nasal steroids such as Flonase Allergy*, Nasacort Allergy*, Rhinocort Allergy*
Respiratory – anti-cholinergics	Incruse Ellipta, Tudorza Pressair	Spiriva
Respiratory – anti-inflammatory	Aerospan, Alvesco, Armonair, Asmanex, Pulmicort	Arnuity Ellipta, Flovent, Qvar Redihaler
Respiratory – ICS/LABAs	Advair Diskus, Airduo (brand and generic)	Advair HFA, Breo Ellipta, Dulera, fluticasone-salmeterol (generic Advair Diskus), Symbicort, wixela
Respiratory – LABAs	Arcapta, Brovana, Striverdi	Perforomist, Serevent
Respiratory – LAMA/LABAs	Bevespi, Utibron	Anoro Ellipta, Combivent, Stiolto
Respiratory – SABAs	ProAir Digihaler, Proventil HFA, Ventolin HFA, Xopenex HFA (brand and generic)	albuterol HFA, ProAir HFA, ProAir Respiclick
Sedative/hypnotics	Intermezzo, Rozerem, zolpidem ER	eszopiclone, zolpidem
Testosterone – topical	Androgel 1%, 1.62%, Fortesta, Natesto, Testim, Vogelxo	testosterone gel, gel pump, topical solution
Thyroid	Armour Thyroid, Synthroid, Tirosint	levothyroxine

*OTC - Available over the counter without a prescription required

Common medications not on the Essential Drug List (in alphabetical order)

Actemra	Beconase AQ	Genotropin	Natesto	Qnasl/children	Testim
Acticlate	Bevespi	Glumetza (brand and generic)	Nesina	Qtern	Tirosint
Aciphex (brand and generic)	Brovana	Glyxambi	Nexium (brand and generic)	Relpax	Tremfya
Admelog	Cialis	Harvoni	Norditropin	Renflexis	Tresiba
Adrenaclick	Cimzia	Ilumya	Novolin	Riomet	Tudorza Pressair
Advair Diskus	Crestor	Incruse Ellipta	Novolog	Rozerem	Tysabri
Aerospan	Daklinza	Inflectra	Olysio	Saizen	Utibron
Afrezza	Diabetic test strips – all except OneTouch & Accu-chek	Intermezzo	Omnaris	Segluromet	Ventolin HFA
Airduo (brand and generic)	Doryx	Invokamet/XR	Omnitrope	Seysara	Viagra
Altprev	Epclusa	Invokana	Onglyza	Skyrizi	Vibramycin
Alvesco	EpiPen	Karbinal ER	Oracea (brand and generic)	Solodyn	Viekira Pak/XR
Androgel 1%, 1.62%	EpiPen JR	Kazano	Orencia	Sovaldi	Vogelxo
Apidra	Epogen	Kevzara	Otezla	Staxyn	Xhance
Arcapta	Fiasp	Kombiglyze XR	Pegasys	Steglatro	Ximino ER
Armonair	fluticasone nasal spray	lansoprazole/ODT	Prevacid/ODT (brand and generic)	Steglujan	Xopenex HFA (brand and generic)
Armour Thyroid	Focalin XR	Levitra	ProAir Digihaler	Stendra	zolpidem ER
Asmanex	Fortamet (brand and generic)	levocetirizine	Protonix	Striverdi	Zomacton
Auvi-Q	Fortesta	Livalo	Proventil HFA	Synthroid	
Basaglar	Frova	Mircera	Pulmicort	Tanzeum	

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