



# Prior Authorization Program

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico is working to find ways to manage the rising cost of prescription drugs. Your benefit plan uses tools, such as prior authorization, that can help control costs for everyone.

## What is prior authorization?

The prior authorization program encourages safe and cost-effective medication use. The program applies to certain high-cost drugs that have the potential for misuse. Before medications included in the prior authorization program can be covered under your benefit plan, your doctor will need to get approval through Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico.

If you are already taking or are prescribed a drug that is part of the prior authorization program, your doctor can submit a prior authorization request form so your prescription can be considered for coverage. Your doctor can find prior authorization forms on the provider website at [bcbsnm.com](http://bcbsnm.com). Doctors may also call 800-544-1378 with questions, or to get a form.

## How does the program work?

### If the prior authorization request is approved:

You will pay the appropriate amount based on your prescription drug benefit when you fill your prescription.

### If the prior authorization request is not approved:

The medication will not be covered under your prescription drug benefit. You can still purchase the medication, but you will be responsible for the full cost. Or, you can talk to your doctor to find out if another drug might be right for you. Remember, treatment decisions are *always* between you and your doctor. As always, the appeal rights provided by your benefit plan are available to you.

## Why are only certain drugs included in the program?

The program's goal is to promote safe, cost-effective medication use. Therefore, the prior authorization program includes drugs that are not only high-cost but sometimes are misused. Growth hormone is one example. These drug products are meant to treat growth hormone deficiency and other medical conditions. However, growth hormone is sometimes used to increase muscle mass and for its anti-aging effects, which may not be medically necessary.

**Treatment decisions are always between you and your doctor.**



## What should I do if I take a drug that is part of the program?

*If you are already taking a medication that becomes part of a prior authorization program for your prescription drug benefit: your doctor will need to submit a prior authorization request for your prescription before you can continue to receive coverage for the drug.*

*If you start taking a medication that is included in the prior authorization program for your prescription drug benefit: your doctor will need to submit a prior authorization request before the drug can be covered under your benefit plan.*

## What medications are included in the prior authorization program?


The box above right shows examples of drug categories which may be included in the prior authorization program. If you have questions about the prior authorization program, or to find out if a particular drug is included in the program, call the number on the back of your ID card. You may also visit [bcbsnm.com](http://bcbsnm.com) and log in to Blue Access for Members<sup>SM</sup> to view your plan's prescription drug list. If a drug commonly requires prior authorization, it is noted in the list.

### Drug Categories Which May Be Included in the Prior Authorization Program\*

Androgens/Anabolic Steroids
Antibiotics (e.g., doxycycline/minocycline)
Antifungal Agents
Erectile Dysfunction
Fentanyl (oral/nasal)
Narcolepsy
Opioid Dependence
Specialty Medications

\* Categories may be added or removed and the program may change from time to time.

Tools such as prior authorization encourage safe and cost-effective medication use, and help manage the rising cost of prescription drugs – for everyone.



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