PHARMACY POLICY STATEMENT
Marketplace

DRUG NAME	Epoetin alfa (Epogen, Procrit, Retacrit)
BILLING CODE	Epogen/Procrit: J0885 (non-ESRD) Retacrit: Q5106 (non-ESRD) Pharmacy: NDC
BENEFIT TYPE	Medical or Pharmacy
STATUS	Prior Authorization Required

Epoetin alfa is an erythropoiesis-stimulating agent (ESA) indicated for: 1) Treatment of anemia due to a) chronic kidney disease (CKD) in patients on dialysis and not on dialysis, b) Zidovudine in patients with HIV-infection, c) the effects of concomitant myelosuppressive chemotherapy, or 2) Reduction of allogeneic red blood cell (RBC) transfusions in patients undergoing elective, noncardiac, nonvascular surgery. Retacrit (epoetin alfa-epbx) is a non-interchangeable biosimilar of the reference products Epogen and Procrit. Epoetin alfa stimulates erythropoiesis by the same mechanism as endogenous erythropoietin to stimulate RBC production.
ESAs are the standard of care for treating anemia in CKD (especially in dialysis patients), reducing the need for blood transfusions. Typically, increased hemoglobin levels are not observed earlier than 2 weeks after treatment initiation. A boxed warning states ESAs increase the risk of death, myocardial infarction, stroke, venous thromboembolism, thrombosis of vascular access, and tumor progression or recurrence. The lowest sufficient dose should be used.

Epoetin alfa will be considered for coverage when the following criteria are met:

Anemia

For **initial**

For **reauthorization**:

1. Labs must show stabilized or increased hemoglobin level compared to baseline, not to exceed 11.5 g/dL (12 g/dL for pediatrics or zidovudine patients); AND

6. Palmer SC, Saglimbene V, Mavridis D, et al. Erythropoiesis-stimulating agents for anaemia in adults with chronic kidney disease: a network meta-analysis. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2014;2014(12):CD010590. Published 2014 Dec 8. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD010590.pub2

Effective date: 04/01/2023
Revised date: 09/28/2022