

WCB NON-OPIOID Coverage and Special Authorization Quick Reference Guide

QUANTITY LIMITS

All opioid medications have a limit for WCB coverage of 200 morphine equivalents (MEQ) per day. Many non-opioid medications also have quantity limits in place based on existing evidence for maximum recommended doses and safety. In order for a drug prescribed at an amount exceeding its quantity limit to be covered, a Special Authorization must be first submitted to Medavie Blue Cross for evaluation. For information on quantity limits for individual drugs/products, refer to **Special Authorization Drugs & Coverage Criteria** at wcb.ns.ca/formulary

BENEFIT STATUS FOR COMMON NON-OPIOID MEDICATIONS

The following table is a **general guide** for the benefit status of commonly prescribed non-opioid medications. **The information below is not all inclusive and is subject to change over time.**

Common Medications Requested	Typically Prescribed For:	Benefit Status
Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Ketorolac	bones/nerves/spinal cord, musculoskeletal	Open Benefit (with quantity limit)
Benzodiazepine derivatives (e.g., diazepam, oxazepam, lorazepam, bromazepam)	cancer, psychological disorders	Open Benefit (with quantity limit)
	musculoskeletal, wounds	Non Benefit
Celecoxib	bones/nerves/spinal cord, musculoskeletal	Open Benefit
Cyclobenzaprine	bones/nerves/spinal cord, musculoskeletal	Open Benefit (with quantity limit)
	circulatory system diseases, respiratory system diseases	Non-Benefit
Cymbalta®	bones/nerves/spinal cord, musculoskeletal, psychological	Special Authorization
Esomeprazole (Nexium®)	all injury types	Non-Benefit
Gabapentin, Pregabalin	bones/nerves/spinal cord, musculoskeletal	Special Authorization (with quantity limit)
Long-acting Beta2-agonists (<i>Formoterol, Salmeterol</i>), Long-acting Beta2-agonists/ Inhaled corticosteroids combinations, tiotropium bromide	respiratory	Special Authorization
Vimovo®	all injury types	Non-Benefit
Zopiclone	bones/nerves/spinal cord, musculoskeletal, intracranial, trauma, cancer, psychological disorders	Open Benefit (with quantity limit)

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WCB DRUG FORMULARY

Like many other programs, WCB uses a formulary structure. In our program, injured workers are assigned to a formulary based on nature of injury/illness. This means what may be open benefit for some types of injury or illness may not be covered for others. As a result, a **complete** listing of WCB formulary contents cannot be provided in a user-friendly format.

This quick reference guide is designed to give you an overview of coverage, including information on the coverage status for commonly prescribed medications. Please see the **WCB Opioid Coverage Quick Reference Guide** for other important information.

A complete list of drugs/products which require special authorization can be found at wcb.ns.ca/formulary in the **Special Authorization Drugs & Coverage Criteria** listing. If you have questions about coverage of a specific drug/product for a specific patient, call Medavie Blue Cross at 1-855-496-5810 with **your patient's WCB claim number** ready.

WHAT IS COVERED FOR MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES (SPRAINS/STRAINS)?

This is the most common type of workplace injury. Below is a sample listing of commonly prescribed medications that are covered (open benefit) for musculoskeletal injuries:

- Acetaminophen (with quantity limit)
- Amitriptyline
- ASA (with quantity limit)
- Baclofen, Norflex®
- Celecoxib (generics of Celebrex®)
- Cyclobenzaprine (with quantity limit)
- Ibuprofen (with quantity limit)
- Ketorolac (with quantity limit)
- Naproxen

HOW DOES SPECIAL AUTHORIZATION WORK?

Example – Your patient has compensable asthma and you want to prescribe Advair. You will need to complete a WCB Non-Opioid Special Authorization form showing that your patient:

- is currently using optimal doses of inhaled corticosteroids;
- is experiencing additional symptoms requiring improved control (e.g., cough, being awakened from sleep, not able to participate in usual activities due to asthma symptoms); and
- is requiring an increased amount of short-acting beta2-agonists.

Your form is to be submitted via fax to Medavie Blue Cross. Once reviewed by Medavie Blue Cross, if the above criteria are met, you will receive written notification of approval.

NOTE: Criteria for special authorization approval vary by drug/product. To review the criteria for individual drugs/products, refer to **Special Authorization Drugs & Coverage Criteria** at wcb.ns.ca/formulary

CONDITIONAL BENEFITS (For specific details – please see the WCB website)

Some drugs/products will have open benefit coverage IF other medications related to treatment of a workplace illness/injury are prescribed:

- Gastric cytoprotection medications (omeprazole, rabeprazole, pantoprazole sodium) will automatically be covered if the patient is receiving an NSAID as a WCB benefit.
- **Note:** Esomeprazole (e.g., Nexium®), alone OR in combination with naproxen (i.e., Vimovo®) is not a WCB benefit.
- Laxatives will automatically be covered if the patient is receiving an opioid as a WCB benefit.

CRITERIA CODES

Criteria codes to be used at the pharmacy are available for a select number of medications (e.g., ciprodex, rivaroxaban, azithromycin). These codes will allow for automatic adjudication if the prescriber and/or pharmacist determine that the criteria have been met. Refer to **WCB Drug Formularies – Criteria Codes** for a list of drugs eligible for adjudication with a criteria code. Updates will be published on the WCB website: wcb.ns.ca/formulary