

The Script

network
health
Dispensing pharmacy
updates and guidance

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Breathe at Ease Program Offered at no Cost

Network Health offers members a proactive condition management program called *Breathe at Ease* that is designed to help patients with chronic bronchitis, emphysema and COPD to avoid flare-ups, control symptoms and potentially improve their lung conditions. The program is intended to supplement a physician's care.

Breathe at Ease is available to qualified members at no cost. To learn more about the program and available locations, or to refer a patient to the program, contact Network Health's condition management team at 920-720-1600.

Brand Inhalers Now Available as Generic

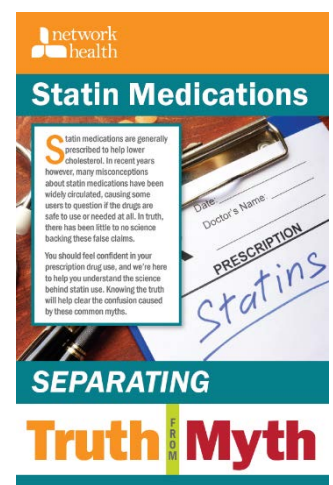
ProAir, Ventolin and Proventil inhalers are now available as a generic version. If you write your prescription as **Albuterol HFA** inhaler, the pharmacy will fill the prescription with the generic version.

Remind Patients with Diabetes to Take Statins

Network Health encourages members with diabetes to take their prescribed medications and undergo appropriate health screenings. Recently, our efforts revealed that some diabetic members are not taking a statin, or are unwilling to try a different statin, because of experienced side effects.

Statin-type cholesterol medications have been shown to greatly lower the risk of heart attack and stroke in patients with diabetes. The recommendation is that all diabetics, regardless of cholesterol levels, take a statin unless other medical reasons prevent it.

At Network Health, our pharmacists have created an informational member booklet that debunks the seven most common myths that discourage patients from taking statins. [Statin Medications: Separating Truth from Myth](#) was recently mailed to members with diabetes to encourage medication adherence. Please remind patients about the importance of taking their medications and review the benefits of statin medications with them.



Continuous Glucose Monitoring Systems Covered

A Continuous Glucose Monitoring System (CGM) is not for every person with diabetes, but for those who qualify, it may mean a big difference in keeping their blood sugars under control and avoiding hypoglycemic (low blood sugar) episodes.

Two CGM systems are covered by Network Health under the pharmacy benefit: **Dexcom and FreeStyle Libre**. Both have their own unique features for monitoring blood sugars, so you can select which system would be the most appropriate for your patient. What both systems have in common is no more daily finger sticking by the patient.

Our Medicare members pay a \$0 cost share when systems are obtained through their retail pharmacy. Both systems require the physician to complete a prior authorization request to make sure the patient is an ideal candidate for the CGM system.

Network Health is one of only two Medicare plans that covers these two CGM's at a retail pharmacy at the \$0 cost share. Other plans cover them under the medical benefit, making the member go through a DME company and pay 20 percent of the CGM system cost.

Network Health commercial and Healthcare Exchange members will pay the cost associated with their benefit. A prior authorization request is also required.

Test Strip Systems Also Available

Most people with diabetes check their blood sugars with a diabetic test strip system. Network Health covers the One Touch and Accu-Chek brands at a \$0 cost share to Medicare members.

Commercial members are offered One Touch as their preferred system, while Healthcare Exchange members have Accu-Chek as their preferred system. Member cost will vary based on the commercial or Healthcare Exchange benefit design.

Vouchers for a no-cost meter can be found on networkhealth.com/pharmacy-information.

Do Your Patients Struggle with Insulin Cost?

Prices for insulin for diabetes treatment have been skyrocketing over the past few years, leading many consumers to face the difficult decision of whether they can afford their monthly medications.

Studies show that high medication costs can lead to poor adherence, like skipping or rationing doses. When it comes to medications like insulin, poor adherence may lead to long-term complications, hospitalization or even death.

In a research letter published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Internal Medicine, about one in four patients reported cost-related insulin underuse and about one-third of these patients did not discuss this with their provider. (continued)

The survey results indicated that patients who reported cost-related underuse were 43 percent more likely to have poor glycemic control compared to 28 percent in the control group. The article suggests that clinicians should screen all patients for cost concerns to help them address their medication related challenges.

How Can Providers Help?

1. **Have “The Talk” about the cost of medications.** Initially, your patient may be reluctant or embarrassed to discuss medication affordability. Approaching the subject with open-ended questions related to adherence may help break the ice (e.g. “What challenges do you have remembering to take your medications every day?”). Review labs or other clinical findings. The retail pharmacy or health plan also can be an excellent resource for obtaining information related to medication adherence, member cost and alternative options.
2. **Be savvy about prescribing lower-priced insulins.** Could NPH insulin (e.g. Novolin N) be considered instead of the more expensive long-acting basal insulins (e.g. Lantus, Levemir, or Tresiba)? If a basal insulin is most appropriate, would a switch to Basaglar (a biosimilar to Lantus) be an appropriate alternative? Regular insulin (e.g. Novolin R) proves to be a more cost-effective approach than fast-acting insulin (e.g. Novolog).

Medication*	Strength	Quantity	Ingredient cost (AWP)**
Basaglar Kwikpen	100 units/ml	5x3ml pens (one box)	\$392
Lantus SoloStar	100 units/ml	5x3ml pens (one box)	\$510
Levemir Flexpen	100 units/ml	5x3ml pens (one box)	\$555
Tresiba Flextouch	100 units/ml	5x3ml pens (one box)	\$610
Novolog Flexpen	100 units/ml	5x3ml pens (one box)	\$671
Novolin N	100 units/ml	10 ml vial	\$165***
Novolin R	100 units/ml	10 ml vial	\$165***

* Currently, Humulin and Humalog insulins are non-preferred on all lines of business **Ingredient costs last updated March 2019. Price subject to change. *** Ingredient cost for WalMart's Relion brand of Novolin insulins is \$25 per vial (Novolin N or Novolin R). Last confirmed in March 2019, price subject to change.

3. **Help patients find assistance programs.** Check with the drug manufacturer about programs that may help with the medication cost. RxAssist.org is a useful resource. The [Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation \(JDRF\)](http://JuvenileDiabetesResearchFoundation.org) and [American Diabetes Association \(ADA\)](http://AmericanDiabetesAssociation.org) provide multiple avenues for patient assistance, including options for those that do not qualify for manufacture assistance. Local Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) can be helpful resources not only for health care, but also for assisting with other needs such as transportation, nutrition and meal programs. [Find](#) a local center near you.

The 340B Drug Discount Program was created by the federal government requiring drug manufacturers to provide outpatient drugs to eligible health care organizations and covered entities at significantly reduced prices. To search eligible health care organizations, covered entities or instructions on how to register, visit www.hrsa.gov/opa/eligibility-and-registration.

4. **Refer patients to Medication Therapy Management.** Refer your Medicare patients for a comprehensive medication review (CMR) with their health plan pharmacist. The discussion gives members an opportunity to review their medication and identify potential cost-saving strategies. A referral can be placed through the provider portal or you can instruct your patient to [call Network Health customer service](#) and ask to speak with a pharmacist about the MTM program. (continued)

5. **Encourage patients to make lifestyle modifications.** Reducing calorie intake, losing excess weight and regularly exercising can help improve blood sugar control. Network Health offers support for lifestyle changes through health and wellness programs. Visit [networkhealth.com](https://www.networkhealth.com) and select Wellness Programs to learn more.

Pharmacy and Therapeutics Changes: March and May

Medication Highlights															
	Comment	Generic	Preferred Brand	Non-Preferred Brand	Preferred Specialty	Non-Preferred Specialty				Comment	Generic	Preferred Brand	Non-Preferred Brand	Preferred Specialty	Non-Preferred Specialty
Arakoda	PA ¹			M, C					Firdapse	PA, QL ²				M	C
Nuzyra					M	C			Gamifant					M	C
Oxervate					M, C				Lorbrena	PA, QL ²				M	C
Seysara					M	C			Talzenna	PA, QL ²				M	C
Tegsedi	PA, QL ²				M	C			Ultomiris					M	C
Xepi				M, C					Vitrakvi	PA, QL ²				M	C
Xyosted	PA			M ³					Vizimpro	PA, QL				M	C
Aemcolo DR				M, C					Xospata	PA, QL ²				M	C
Daurismo	PA, QL ²				M	C			Yupelri	PA ⁴				M	C

ST indicates that the medication is part of a step-therapy protocol

M indicates Medicare preferred drug list (PDL) status

QL indicates a quantity limit

C indicates Commercial PDL status

PA indicates that prior authorization is required

Footnotes

1. PA for Commercial only

2. QL for Commercial only

3. Non-preferred brand for Medicare open formulary, excluded from Part D coverage on Medicare closed formulary, excluded from coverage on commercial formulary.

4. PA for Medicare only

Contact Network Health Pharmacy Department

A pharmacist at Network Health is always available to help your office staff with any pharmacy-related questions. They can be reached at gmelis@networkhealth.com, apeterso@networkhealth.com, bcoopman@networkhealth.com, awheaton@networkhealth.com or tregalia@networkhealth.com.

Pharmacy Review

If you have questions about the 2019 pharmacy prescription benefits for Network Health members, or questions about websites where members can obtain information on patient assistance programs to help cover cost of medications, please contact Gary Melis at gmelis@networkhealth.com or 920-720-1696. Gary is available for office visits to discuss any pharmacy-related topics with pharmacy staff.

Preferred Drug List

Network Health's current Preferred Drug List is available from multiple electronic sources. It can be viewed and printed from networkhealth.com in the Prescription Benefit section.

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Editor: Gary Melis, RPh. gmelis@networkhealth.com

Co-Editor: Anna Peterson Sanders, Pharm.D. apeterso@networkhealth.com

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