

5.01.42

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Subsection:	Anti-Infective Agents	Original Policy Date:	March 3, 2017
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Last Review Date: November 30, 2018

Anthelmintic Drugs

Description

Albenza (albendazole), Emverm (mebendazole)

Background

Anthelmintics are agents used to eliminate intestinal worms (helminthes) from the body. Helminthes can be divided into three groups: cestodes, or tapeworms; nematodes, or roundworms; and trematodes, or flukes. The helminthes differ from other infectious organisms in that they have a complex body structure. They are multicellular and have partial or complete organ systems (e.g., muscular, nervous, digestive, and reproductive). Several of the drugs used to treat worm infections affect the nervous system of the parasite and result in muscle paralysis. Other drugs affect the uptake of glucose and thus energy stores. Anthelmintics are effective in eradicating worms but proper hygiene is necessary to prevent re-infection (1).

Regulatory Status

FDA-approved indication:

1. Albenza is an anthelmintic drug indicated for: (2)
 - a. Treatment of parenchymal neurocysticercosis due to active lesions caused by larval forms of the pork tapeworm, *Taenia solium*.
 - b. Treatment of cystic hydatid disease of the liver, lung, and peritoneum, caused by the larval form of the dog tapeworm, *Echinococcus granulosus*.
2. Emverm is an anthelmintic drug indicated for the treatment of *Enterobius vermicularis* (pinworm), *Trichuris trichiura* (whipworm), *Ascaris lumbricoides* (common roundworm), *Ancylostoma duodenale* (common hookworm), and *Necator americanus* (American hookworm) in single or mixed infections (3).

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World Health Organization and CDC guidelines recommend use in several other parasitic infections (1).

Related policies

Policy

This policy statement applies to clinical review performed for pre-service (Prior Approval, Precertification, Advanced Benefit Determination, etc.) and/or post-service claims.

Emverm and Albenza may be considered **medically necessary** for the treatment of *Enterobius vermicularis* (pinworm) with an inadequate response, intolerance, or contraindication to over-the-counter pyrantel pamoate (Pin-X, Pinworm suspension), *Trichuris trichiura* (whipworm), *Ascaris lumbricoides* (common roundworm), *Ancylostoma duodenale* (common hookworm), *Necator americanus* (American hookworm), *Strongyloides stercoralis* (threadworm), *Dracunculus medinensis* (guinea worm), *Onchocerca volvulus* (filarial worm), *Echinococcus granulosus* (dog tapeworm), *Taenia saginata* (beef tapeworm), *Taenia solium* (pork tapeworm), *Fasciola hepatica* (liver fluke), or *Schistosoma* spp. (blood fluke).

Emverm and Albenza may be considered **investigational** for all other indications.

Prior-Approval Requirements

Diagnoses

Patient must have **ONE** of the following:

1. *Enterobius vermicularis* (pinworm)
 - a. Inadequate response, intolerance, or contraindication to over-the-counter pyrantel pamoate (Pin-X, Pinworm suspension)
2. *Trichuris trichiura* (whipworm)
3. *Ascaris lumbricoides* (common roundworm)
4. *Ancylostoma duodenale* (common hookworm)
5. *Necator americanus* (American hookworm)
6. *Strongyloides stercoralis* (threadworm)
7. *Dracunculus medinensis* (guinea worm)
8. *Onchocerca volvulus* (filarial worm)
9. *Echinococcus granulosus* (dog tapeworm)

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10. *Taenia saginata* (beef tapeworm)
11. *Taenia solium* (pork tapeworm)
12. *Fasciola hepatica* (liver fluke)
13. *Schistosoma spp* (blood fluke)

Prior – Approval *Renewal* Requirements

None

Policy Guidelines

Pre - PA Allowance

None

Prior - Approval Limits

Quantity	Emverm	12 tablets
	Albenza	120 tablets per 30 days
Duration	<i>Enterobius vermicularis</i> (pinworm)	1 month
	Other indications	6 months

Rationale

Summary

Anthelmintics are agents used to eliminate intestinal worms (helminthes) from the body. Several of the drugs used to treat worm infections affect the nervous system of the parasite and result in muscle paralysis. Other drugs affect the uptake of glucose and thus energy stores. Both Emverm and Albenza are indicated for the treatment of various types of helminthes. Anthelmintics are effective in eradicating worms but proper hygiene is necessary to prevent re-infection (1).

Prior authorization is required to ensure the safe, clinically appropriate and cost effective use of Emverm and Albenza while maintaining optimal therapeutic outcomes.

References

1. World Health Organization. Preventive chemotherapy in human helminthiasis: a manual for health professionals. 2006.

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2. Albenza [package insert]. Hayward, CA: Impax Specialty Pharma; December 2017.
3. Emverm [package insert]. Hayward, CA: Impax Specialty Pharma; June 2017.

Policy History

Date	Action
March 2017	New addition to PA
June 2017	Annual review
December 2017	Annual review and reference update
November 2018	Annual review and reference update

Keywords

This policy was approved by the FEP® Pharmacy and Medical Policy Committee on November 30, 2018 and is effective on January 1, 2019.