

Molina Healthcare of South Carolina

Important Information. Please Read.

February 2023

Children's medication shortage causes drug stores to limit purchases amid "tripledemic"

This was a common news headline during the month of December as RSV, COVID and influenza impacted the health of many people and especially children. As respiratory illness in children peaked, children's pain and fever-reducing medications were in short supply. Along with the increased use of pain and fever-reducing medication, the use of OTC cough and cold combination products in children has also increased.

As a reminder, guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics states that "cough and cold medicines should not be prescribed, recommended, or used for respiratory illnesses in young children. Research has shown that these products offer little benefit to young children and can have potentially serious side effects. Many cough and cold products for children have more than one ingredient, increasing the chance of accidental overdose if combined with another product."¹

It's important to note that the FDA doesn't recommend OTC medicines for cough and cold symptoms in children younger than two because they could cause serious and potentially life-threatening side effects. Manufacturers voluntarily label these cough and cold products to state: "Do not use in children under four years of age."

In summary, AAP and FDA do not recommend cough and cold medications for young children. To help keep our pediatric Medicaid members safe and healthy, Molina would like to provide a reminder of some of the preferred cough and cold medications for use when appropriately indicated.

- Preferred over-the-counter (OTC) products are covered at the pharmacy with a prescription to facilitate medication review.
- Writing a prescription for preferred OTC products allows it to be processed through the member's insurance at the pharmacy.
- Members ages 18 years of age and under have a \$0 copay.

¹Carr BC. Efficacy, abuse, and toxicity of over-the-counter cough and cold medications in the pediatric population. *Currt Opin Pediatrics*. 2006 Apr;18(2):184–88.

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| Class * | Medications - please check the Preferred Drug List (PDL) for product specific QL (quantity limits) and AGE (age limits). |
|-----------------------------|---|
| ANTITUSSIVES | Benzonatate cap 100 mg - QL Benzonatate cap 200 mg - QL Cough Relief OTC liquid 15mg/5ml Giltuss Hone OTC liquid 30/10ml Honey DM OTC liquid 15mg/5ml Hydrocodone Bitartrate-Homatropine Methylbrom solution 5-1.5 mg/5ml (generic of HYCODAN) - QL Hydromet syrup 5-1.5/5 (generic of HYCODAN) - QL Tussin long OTC liquid 15mg/5ml Wal-Tussin OTC liquid 15mg/5ml |
| EXPECTORANTS | Guaifenesin OTC liquid 100 mg/5ml – QL/AL Guaifenesin OTC tablet 200 mg - QL/AL Guaifenesin OTC tablet 400 mg – QL/AL Guaifenesin OTC tablet er 12hr 600 mg - QL |
| DECONGESTANTS | Oxymetazoline OTC nasal solution 0.05% Phenylephrine OTC tablet 10 mg Pseudoephedrine 5 mg/5 mL syrup Pseudoephedrine 30mg tablet Pseudoephedrine 60mg tablet Pseudoephedrine ER 12hour 120 mg tablet Sudafed PE OTC Children solution |
| COMBINATION PRODUCTS | Cetirizine-Pseudoephedrine OTC tablet ER 12 HR 5-120 mg – QL/AL Brompheniramine & Pseudoephedrine OTC elixir 1-15 mg/5ml - QL Dextromethorphan-Guaifenesin OTC liquid 10-100 mg/5ml – QL Dextromethorphan-Guaifenesin OTC liquid 10-200 mg/5ml – QL Dextromethorphan-Guaifenesin OTC syrup 10-100 mg/5ml – QL Dextromethorphan-Guaifenesin OTC tablet er 12hr 30-600 mg – QL Diphenhydramine-Phenylephrine OTC liquid 6.25-2.5 mg/5ml - QL Guaifenesin-Codeine solution 100-10 mg/5ml – QL/AL Loratadine-Pseudoephedrine OTC tablet ER 12hour 5-120 mg - QL Loratadine-Pseudoephedrine OTC tablet ER 24hour 10-240 mg – QL Promethazine & Phenylephrine syrup 6.25-5mg/5ml - QL Promethazine w/ Codeine syrup 6.25-10 mg/5ml – QL/AL Promethazine-DM syrup 6.25-15 mg/5ml – QL/AL Promethazine-Phenylephrine-Codeine syrup 6.25- 5-10 mg/5ml – QL/AL Pseudoephedrine-Brompheniramine-DM syrup 30-2-10 mg/5ml – QL Pseudoephedrine-Guaifenesin OTC tablet er 12hr 60-600 mg – QL/AL |
| Misc. Respiratory Inhalants | Sodium Chloride Nebulizer Solution 0.9% |

* - A brand-name drug for which a generic product becomes available will become non-preferred, with the generic product covered in its place, upon release of the generic product to the market.

