

What is Changing? Allegra-D[®] is being deleted from the formulary.

When?

- For Commercial and Medicaid groups, Allegra-D will be deleted on July 1, 2009.
- For the Medicare Drug Formulary - Allegra-D will be deleted pending CMS approval. An additional notice will be provided regarding its formulary status.

What about current Members? Are Changes required?

Starting July 1, coverage for Allegra-D will depend on benefits. Members with a non-formulary benefit will generally pay a higher co-pay for Allegra-D. Coverage is generally not available for members with “closed” plans unless there is an authorization for Allegra-D.

Will patients pay more?

Members continuing to use Allegra-D will probably pay a higher co-pay or co-insurance. Allegra-D is available to members with a non-formulary benefit with a higher co-pay (no authorization is needed). Coverage is generally not available for members with “closed” plans unless there is an authorization for Allegra-D.

Members changing to preferred products will usually not see cost increases. OTC costs are usually low, and prescription fexofenadine has a lower generic co-pay.

What is Allegra-D? Allegra-D is a combination medication with fexofenadine and pseudoephedrine, commonly used for allergies.

What are the preferred options?

OTC products (not covered as a prescription benefit) include loratadine, cetirizine, pseudoephedrine, loratadine-D, and cetirizine-D.

Formulary options include fexofenadine (generic Allegra[®]).

How can members get pseudoephedrine?

Pseudoephedrine is available “over-the-counter”, and is kept “behind-the-counter” at pharmacies. Customers should ask at the pharmacy, and will be asked to show identification and for their signature. There are also quantity limits (maximum amounts that can be purchased each day and each month). These extra steps are required by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to limit diversion to methamphetamine labs.

In MN, OTC pseudoephedrine is limited to 3.6 gm per day (up to #120 30mg tablets), and 6 gm per 30 days (up to #200 30mg tablets).

Larger amounts can be dispensed with a prescription. Prescriptions for pseudoephedrine (and for Allegra-D) need to be manually signed per controlled substance regulations.

Why are these changes being made? Changes are being made to promote higher-value medication options. Decisions were made by the HealthPartners Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee following a review of the efficacy, safety, and costs of these products. Several effective lower-cost options are available.

How much do these Allergy Medications Cost?

Fexofenadine	\$45	Allegra-D	\$115
Loratadine OTC	\$5	Loratadine-D OTC	\$15-35
Cetirizine OTC	\$10	Cetirizine-D OTC	\$25-50

Pseudoephedrine OTC \$15-30

Average monthly costs. OTC costs can be different for various package sizes, at different pharmacies, and depending on how much is used.

When does Allegra-D go generic?

Generic Allegra-D 12 hour is expected in Nov 2009.

Generic Allegra-D 24 hour is expected in March 2010.

Why delete Allegra-D if generics are expected?

Allegra-D is significantly more costly now than other effective options, and costs are expected to be significantly higher through most of 2010.

How have providers been notified?

Providers have been notified with the HealthPartners Quarterly Drug Formulary Update April 1 2009 and with Fast Facts May 2009. Letters will be sent to top providers (providers with significant utilization of Allegra-D).

How have members been notified?

Letters will be sent to members currently using Allegra-D, notifying them of this change and that their co-pays may increase if they continue using Allegra-D. Members may contact providers to ask about using preferred options.

What if a member needs Allegra-D?

Allegra-D is available for members with a non-formulary benefit. No authorization is needed, and this group generally pays a higher co-pay.

Authorizations can be requested for fully-insured members with “closed” plans who have significant symptoms despite trying preferred products. Requests should be sent to HealthPartners Pharmacy Services using our standard request form, www.healthpartners.com/files/34431.pdf.