

Essential Drug List

You're working hard to balance your health needs and pharmacy costs — and we're here to help. Our Essential Drug List covers high-quality, affordable drugs that are essential to your health.

What is the Essential Drug List?

The Essential Drug List is a list of brand-name and generic prescription medications that have been selected and are periodically reviewed through Anthem's Pharmacy & Therapeutics process for proven effectiveness, high quality, and affordability. The Essential Drug List includes all of the essentials, but is a focused list that offers pharmacy choices while ensuring there are no gaps in care.

How it works

The Essential Drug List makes it easier to find the most cost-effective choices instead of those higher-cost formulary alternatives or over-the-counter (OTC) drugs. Formulary drugs are on different tiers depending on the your cost-share.

Why the Essential Drug List?

- Includes 60-65% of all prescription medications
- Offers a variety of brand and generic medication choices
- Provides savings by excluding drugs that have lower-cost formulary alternatives, or over-the-counter (OTC) alternatives (such as nasal steroids, PPIs)
- Includes drugs that don't have OTC or lower-cost formulary alternatives
- Maintains clinical integrity without compromising quality and safety
- Was developed and is reviewed regularly through the Pharmacy and Therapeutic (P&T) process¹

Do you have questions?

You can call the Member Services number on your Anthem ID card. We can also help answer your questions or find out if a drug is covered.

Are all medications on the Essential Drug List?

The Essential Drug List is a closed formulary/drug list. That means, sometimes, one or more of the medications you take may no longer be covered or you may have to pay more. But don't worry, you have other choices for your medication(s).

Drug class	Non-formulary drugs	Alternative(s)
ADHD/Stimulant	Adderall XR	amphetamine combo ER
Allergy/Nasal Steroid	budesonide & flunisolide nasal spray	Flonase Allergy*, Nasacort Allergy*
GLP1 (Diabetes)	Victoza	Bydureon & Byetta
Insulin (Diabetes)	Novolog	Humalog
Estrogen Hormone	Minivelle	estradiol patch
PPI (Gastrointestinal)	omeprazole, lansoprazole, pantoprazole, Nexium	omeprazole*, lansoprazole*, Nexium*
High Cholesterol	Crestor	atorvastatin (Lipitor)
Oral contraceptive	Minastrin FE & Lo Estrin FE	Multiple generic contraceptives
LABA combos (Respiratory)	Symbicort	Advair/HFA, Anoro Ellipta, Breo Ellipta & Dulera
Thyroid Hormone	Synthroid	levothyroxine

*OTC — Available over the counter without a prescription required

What to do if a medication is not on the Essential Drug List

There may be times when a medication isn't on the Essential Drug List and your doctor thinks that another option is not right. The prescriber can request an exception review, which usually requires trying two formulary drugs before coverage is allowed. Specialty drugs will be subject to a trial of the preferred drug on our list, if available, and subject to prior authorization. Prior authorization is when the plan reviews a drug first before it's covered.

Want to learn more?

Check out your new drug list at <https://www.anthem.com/pharmacyinformation/>. Select **Essential Drug List** to see which drugs are covered and at what tier level, as well as information on dosage/strength options and prior authorization or step therapy requirements. Drugs in higher tiers usually cost more. If the list doesn't include the drug(s) you take, you may have to pay 100% out of pocket for the drug(s). If the tier is higher for your drug(s), you'll have to pay more than you've been paying.

Talk to your doctor about this change. Only you and your doctor can decide what drugs are right for you and if a switch makes sense. If a medication you're taking is no longer covered, you or your doctor can ask us to keep covering the drug(s) by submitting a request for an exception. This requires you or your doctor to call the number on your member ID card or visit <https://www.anthem.com/pharmacyinformation/> and download the Prior Authorization form.

¹ Anthem's P&T team is made up of physicians and pharmacists that quarterly make sure every drug maintains a high level of quality.

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