



November 16, 2009

Dear Physician:

You have been identified as having recently prescribed a Proton Pump Inhibitor (PPI) to a Caterpillar plan participant. Prevacid (lansoprazole) just recently became available without a prescription. There are now two chemically distinct PPIs available over-the-counter (OTC).

**Effective February 1, 2010**, Caterpillar will no longer cover prescription PPI tablets or capsules for members of the prescription drug benefit.

<b>Drug Name</b>	<b>Availability</b>
Prevacid (lansoprazole)	Prescription and OTC options; not covered by plan
Prilosec (omeprazole)	Prescription and OTC options; not covered by plan
Protonix (pantoprazole)	Available by prescription only; not covered by plan
Nexium (esomeprazole)	Available by prescription only; not covered by plan
Aciphex (rabeprazole)	Available by prescription only; not covered by plan
Kapidex (dexlansoprazole)	Available by prescription only; not covered by plan

NOTE: Certain alternative dosage forms will continue to be covered options with a prior authorization for those who have NG tubes or documented difficulty swallowing.

An internal review of PPI literature, which included the Oregon Evidence-based Practice Center's *Drug Class Review on Proton Pump Inhibitors* (July 2006) and the American Gastroenterological Association's *Medical Position Statement on the Management of Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease* (October 2008), led to the conclusion that all the above PPIs are substantially equivalent when taken at equipotent doses. This outcome was further supported by the recent external publication, *Comparison of proton pump inhibitors*. Pharmacist's Letter / Prescriber's Letter 2009; 25(3):250304.

They determined:

- There is no clinically significant difference between available PPIs for esophagitis healing, symptom relief or prevention of GERD relapse in adults.
- No PPI is clinically superior for treating gastric ulcers, NSAID-induced ulcers, duodenal ulcers, or H. pylori.
- Omeprazole might cause more drug interactions, but overall, there is no difference in side effects with PPIs.

Caterpillar is committed to developing coverage policies based on current published evidence. Feel free to contact us if you have questions.

Sincerely,

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