



November 19, 2009

Dear Caterpillar healthcare participant,

Caterpillar continually reviews prescription drug coverage in an effort to promote cost-effective drug therapy. Recently, the Proton Pump Inhibitor (PPI) drug class, which is commonly used to treat heartburn, stomach ulcers and acid reflux, was reviewed. If you or your dependents have been prescribed any PPI, either a brand or generic, including: **Aciphex (rabeprazole), Kapidex (dexlansoprazole), Nexium (esomeprazole), Prevacid (lansoprazole), Prilosec (omeprazole), or Protonix (pantoprazole)**, the following changes will affect your coverage.*

There are now two over-the-counter (OTC) drug options available within this class. Both Prilosec (omeprazole) and Prevacid (lansoprazole) are now available OTC without a prescription. As a result, Caterpillar will no longer provide prescription coverage of this class of drugs **beginning February 1, 2010**. If you received prior approval for one of these drugs, your approval will expire on February 1, 2010, and your prescription drug benefit coverage for this drug will end.

In the past, brand and generic drugs were removed from coverage because they have an OTC equivalent product that members can purchase without a prescription. Now that more drugs are becoming available OTC, this is being taken into consideration as drug classes are reviewed and decisions are made about what will be covered by the prescription drug benefit. In this instance, coverage of these drugs is being removed because substantially equivalent OTC alternatives are now available and can be obtained without a prescription.

Did you know?

Recently, multiple reports reviewed the current published literature on this class of drugs. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)¹ and Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs² came to the same conclusion that, when compared at the same dosage strengths:

- One Proton Pump Inhibitor is just as effective as another Proton Pump Inhibitor.
- The OTC drugs in this category are just as effective as the drugs available only by prescription.

You may wish to take this letter to your physician prior to February 1, 2010, to discuss potential options or alternatives.**

If you have any questions about this change, please contact RESTAT at 1-877-228-7909. Be sure to have your Caterpillar employee/retiree RESTAT ID ready when you call.

Sincerely,

Patrick McComis, R.Ph.
Vice President of Clinical Services
RESTAT

Sources

1. McDonagh, MS and Carson, S., "Drug class review on Proton Pump Inhibitors – Final Report, July 2006." The Drug Effectiveness Review Project. http://www.ohsu.edu/ohsu.edu/research/policycenter/customcf/derp/product/PPI_Final_Report_update%2041.pdf
2. Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs. "Drugs to Treat Heartburn, Ulcers, and Stomach Acid Reflux: The Proton Pump Inhibitors: Comparing Effectiveness, Safety, and Price." Updated January 2007. <http://www.consumerreports.org/health/resources/pdf/best-buy-drugs/PPIsUpdate-FINAL.pdf>

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

** The information regarding alternatives contained in this letter is not intended and should not be construed, in any way, as medical advice, opinion, diagnosis or as advice about the treatment of any specific medical condition. The information is provided for informational purposes only. You should consult with your physician regarding your particular health needs and whether any of the alternative treatments discussed above is right for you. In the event that the content of this letter or any oral representations made by any person regarding the plan conflict with or are inconsistent with the provisions of the plan document, the provisions of the plan document are controlling. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Caterpillar reserves the right to amend, modify, suspend, replace or terminate any of its plans, policies or programs, in whole or in part, at any time and for any reason, by appropriate company action.