Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™)

Description of Procedure or Service

Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) is a CD52-directed cytolytic monoclonal antibody indicated for the treatment of patients with relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis (MS). Because of its safety profile, the use of alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) should generally be reserved for patients who have had an inadequate response to two or more drugs indicated for the treatment of MS.

Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) is a recombinant humanized IgG1 kappa monoclonal antibody directed against the cell surface glycoprotein, CD52. The precise mechanism by which alemtuzumab exerts its therapeutic effects in multiple sclerosis is unknown but is presumed to involve binding to CD52, a cell surface antigen present on T and B lymphocytes, and on natural killer cells, monocytes, and macrophages. Following cell surface binding to T and B lymphocytes, alemtuzumab results in antibody-dependent cellular cytolysis and complement-mediated lysis. Based on animal data, Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) may cause fetal harm.

Related Policies

Natalizumab (Tysabri)

***Note: This Medical Policy is complex and technical. For questions concerning the technical language and/or specific clinical indications for its use, please consult your physician.

Policy

BCBSNC will provide coverage for Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) for relapsing multiple sclerosis when it is determined to be medically necessary because the medical criteria and guidelines noted below are met.

Benefits Application

This medical policy relates only to the services or supplies described herein. Please refer to the Member's Benefit Booklet for availability of benefits. Member's benefits may vary according to benefit design; therefore member benefit language should be reviewed before applying the terms of this medical policy.

When Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) is covered

Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada) may be medically necessary when the following criteria are met:

1. The patient has relapsing multiple sclerosis, and
Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™)

2. The patient has had an inadequate response to two or more drugs indicated for the treatment of multiple sclerosis.

When Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) is not covered

Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) is considered not medically necessary when criteria under “When Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) is covered” are not met.

Policy Guidelines

Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) is administered by intravenous infusion.

For the treatment of relapsing multiple sclerosis, the first treatment course of 12 mg/day administered on 5 consecutive days is followed by the second treatment course of 12 mg/day administered on 3 consecutive days 12 months after the first treatment course.

Billing/Coding/Physician Documentation Information

This policy may apply to the following codes. Inclusion of a code in this section does not guarantee that it will be reimbursed. For further information on reimbursement guidelines, please see Administrative Policies on the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina web site at www.bcbsnc.com. They are listed in the Category Search on the Medical Policy search page.

Applicable codes: J0202.

BCBSNC may request medical records for determination of medical necessity. When medical records are requested, letters of support and/or explanation are often useful, but are not sufficient documentation unless all specific information needed to make a medical necessity determination is included.

Scientific Background and Reference Sources


Medical Director review 12/2014


Specially Matched Consultant Advisory Panel 5/2017

Policy Implementation/Update Information

12/30/14 New medical policy issued. Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada™) may be medically necessary when the following criteria are met: 1. The patient has relapsing multiple sclerosis, and 2. The patient has had an inadequate response to two or more drugs indicated for the treatment of multiple sclerosis. Medical director review 12/2014. (sk)

9/1/15 Added new HCPCS code Q9979 for effective date 10/1/2015. (sk)
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12/30/15  Code J0202 added and code Q9979 removed from Billing/Coding section. (sk)

7/1/16  Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 5/25/2016. (sk)


Medical policy is not an authorization, certification, explanation of benefits or a contract. Benefits and eligibility are determined before medical guidelines and payment guidelines are applied. Benefits are determined by the group contract and subscriber certificate that is in effect at the time services are rendered. This document is solely provided for informational purposes only and is based on research of current medical literature and review of common medical practices in the treatment and diagnosis of disease. Medical practices and knowledge are constantly changing and BCBSNC reserves the right to review and revise its medical policies periodically.