



## Prior Authorization for ADHD Medications

ADHD is a common neurodevelopmental disorder that affects individuals of all ages, and it is often treated with medications designed to help manage its symptoms. While these medications can be incredibly beneficial, they also come with certain risks and considerations that are important to address. In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in the prescription rates of ADHD medications, particularly stimulant medications. While these medications can provide significant benefits for individuals with ADHD, it's important to be aware that they are classified as stimulants and, like other stimulants, they have the potential for misuse, abuse, and addiction. The safety and effectiveness of these medications are our top priorities.

**Prior authorization (PA)** is a process that requires healthcare providers to obtain approval from our insurance company before prescribing certain medications. This process ensures that the recommended treatment is appropriate for the specific individual and that any potential risks or side effects are carefully evaluated.

- **Patient Safety:** Prior authorization helps us confirm that the prescribed medication is safe and suitable for the member's unique medical history, including any potential contraindications or interactions with other medications.
- **Preventing Overuse:** ADHD medications have a potential for misuse and abuse. By implementing prior authorization, we can help prevent overuse and misuse, which can have serious health consequences.
- **Quality of Care:** This process ensures that the treatment plan aligns with the latest medical guidelines and best practices, ultimately contributing to improved patient outcomes.

### Frequently asked questions

#### 1. How do you decide which ADHD drugs are covered?

The formulary (preferred drug list) is developed based on the recommendation of a committee made up of physicians and pharmacists. The committee meets quarterly to evaluate the current formulary and to make recommendations on new drugs that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or on existing drugs that have new generics, new strengths, or new dosage forms.

available. The drugs selected for the formulary are based on various factors, including safety, efficacy, and cost. Therefore, updates to the formulary may take place quarterly; if your drug is not available on the formulary today, it may be available in the future. Continue to [check our website](#) for any formulary updates.

## **2. How do I know if my drug is covered and on the formulary, and what will be my out-of-pocket cost?**

You can [check our website](#) and/or use the drug search tool. Type the drug or partial drug names in the search tool and then scroll down to select the correct drug. Once the drug is selected, the tool will display the coverage details for the drug. This includes the copay, specific restrictions (i.e., quantity or age limits), prior authorization requirements, covered drug strengths, and available formulary alternatives. If you prefer, you can also download the Curative Formulary on the same page and hit control + 'F' to search for a drug or a class of drugs and see a table representation of what is covered.

## **3. What is prior authorization (PA), and do I need it?**

Prior authorization (PA) is a utilization management process used by all health insurance companies in the United States to determine if they will cover a prescribed procedure, service, or drug. PA determines if a service is medically necessary and if the service is being provided in the most appropriate and beneficial manner. For Curative, there is a list of drugs that require PA available on the [member portal](#). It will also be available to providers through their provider manual. You can find out if a drug needs a PA on the Formulary Search Tool or the Downloadable Curative Formulary. Network providers should contact Curative for PA when required.

## **4. Does my ADHD medication require a prior authorization?**

You can find out if your medication requires PA by visiting our website and using the formulary search tool at [curative.com/drugs](https://curative.com/drugs) under “limits.”

A PA is required on ADHD medication for members under the age of 4 and over the age of 18 for all stimulant ADHD medications (ex. methylphenidate, amphetamine/dextroamphetamine, or lisdexamfetamine).

A PA is required for under the age of 4 for all non-stimulant ADHD medications. This includes guanfacine, clonidine, and atomoxetine.

For members over the age of 18, there is no PA required for non-stimulants, and the non-stimulants are alternatives for the stimulants that require PA.

**5. Why do these drugs require prior authorization?**

These drugs require PA to ensure appropriate use while mitigating misuse, off-label utilization, and overprescribing. ADHD stimulants are C2 controlled substance medications with a high abuse potential similar to drugs like morphine, fentanyl, and Oxycontin. PAs are also put in place to ensure member safety, as there are no clinical criteria for drugs to treat ADHD in adults or very young children.

**6. What are the steps required to obtain a pharmacy prior authorization?**

Your provider would need to submit a pharmacy PA. This form can be found on the Curative website. The Curative PA form can be submitted via fax at 888-293-4075 or by email at [pharmacypa@curative.com](mailto:pharmacypa@curative.com). Your provider should complete the PA form and attach any clinical documentation supporting medical necessity.

**7. What are the key prior authorization requirements for my ADHD medication?**

Stimulant medications prescribed for members under age 4 and over the age of 18 must be prescribed by a psychiatrist/pediatric psychiatrist, neurologist/pediatric neurologist, developmental/behavioral pediatrician, or in consultation with one of these specialists to ensure appropriate FDA-approved diagnosis is met to ensure efficacy and safety. PA criteria also may require step therapy through formulary medications before obtaining non-formulary ADHD medications.

**8. How will I know if my prior authorization has been approved or denied?**

When your prior authorization has been approved or denied, you will receive communication from your Care Navigator or our Member Services team.

**9. What if I had a prior authorization approved for an ADHD drug at my previous plan?**

If your medication is for a stimulant ADHD drug and you are under 4 years of age or older than 18 and were previously approved with an active PA, Curative will allow a 30-day transition of care period from January 1 - January 31, 2024 (for members effective January 1, 2024). If your drug is currently not listed on the formulary, Curative will honor your existing PA during this time frame only. You will be allowed one 30-day fill. This will allow you time to find a new doctor (a psychiatrist is required) and for the doctor to submit the PA to be processed while allowing continuity of care. For any subsequent fills after January 31, 2024, an approved PA must be on record, or the pharmacy will reject the claim. It's important to notify your doctor as soon as possible to submit a new PA to prevent delays in getting your medication.

**10. What if I was originally prescribed an ADHD drug by a specialist years ago?**

You will still need a current PA to be approved by Curative. The review team will consider all clinical supporting materials in the PA decision-making process, including length of therapy, last behavioral health visit, etc.

**11. What timeline should I expect to get a decision on my prior authorization?**

The typical PA can take up to 21 days from when the prescription is written to when it is approved (Source: Kaiser Family Foundation). Common delays occur when the PA form is not completely filled out, the prescriber is unreachable, and/or clinical supporting documentation is not provided by the prescriber. The expected turnaround time is within 24 business hours for expedited PAs and within 72 business hours for standard PAs once all PA materials are received by the plan.

**12. What are the next steps if my prior authorization is denied?**

Your provider will be notified of a denial of services via mail and/or fax. The notification will include a description of the procedure for filing an Appeal. It will include a notice to the Participant of the Participant's right to appeal an adverse determination to an IRO and of the procedures to obtain that review, including a copy of the form prescribed by the Texas Department of Insurance. An Appeal may take up to 30 days to review.

### **13. What are the next steps if an appeal is denied?**

If an appeal is denied, you or your provider can ask that this go to an independent review organization (IRO), and a peer-to-peer is done for review.

### **14. What if I need to but cannot find a specialist to meet the prior authorization requirements?**

Curative can recommend behavioral health specialists. In Texas, we have Televero in-network (behavioral health telemedicine); nationally, we have Teledoc, or we can find you a local provider. You can always contact Member Services at 855-428-7284 to assist with finding a provider.

### **15. I heard there is a shortage of generic ADHD medications, can I just get the brand name? My pharmacy says the generic is unavailable at their location; what should I do?**

Not always. The brand name drugs are usually not on the formulary and will require a review for medical necessity. If the generic is not available at their location, it may be possible that another pharmacy may have the generic available. The network pharmacy can check with other pharmacies for availability, or you can contact Curative Pharmacy to assist. Note the branded medication often requires a higher copay than the generic.

### **16. What do I do if I can only take the brand ADHD drug?**

Many brand-name ADHD drugs are non-formulary and will require a PA. Brand name drugs have the same safety and efficacy profile as the generic. Curative has an extensive list of generic ADHD drugs on the formulary. As described above, brand drugs will often require a higher copay than generic ones.

### **17. How and when can I get in touch with Curative Member Services? Who do I contact when I have billing questions, need to get claim forms, or talk to if a claim has been rejected?**

We're here to help! Curative Member Services can be reached 24/7/365 at: [curative.com/support](https://curative.com/support), 855-428-7284, or [health@curative.com](mailto:health@curative.com).