

Compounded drugs and their coverage:

Compounded drugs are produced by mixing or altering the existing prescription medications for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, an individual cannot use the standard version of the product because of an allergy to one of its ingredients. In other cases, the right dosage form is not readily available, so the commercially offered drug products need to be transformed into a different form. For people who can't swallow tablets or capsules, compounding procedures can customize a drug into a powder, liquid, lozenge, suppository, or another form.

Compounded medications are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), unlike drugs listed in our formulary. Without the FDA oversight, there is an extra risk factor involved when a compounded product is prepared because it is not tested for purity, stability, safety, effectiveness, or dosage.

Since the quality of compounded products may be compromised, the FDA recommends using an approved product that has undergone rigorous testing instead of a compounded medication when possible.

Our Plan does not cover all compounded medications. In some cases, certain compounded drugs are "excluded" from coverage by Medicare. In other cases, we have decided not to cover a particular compounded drug. To ensure the appropriate utilization of compounded medications, certain rules and restrictions may apply; i.e., Prior Authorization requirements.

Our members are advised to use a compounded medication only when it is medically necessary. If you have questions about compounded medications and their coverage, please call Member Services 1-800-559-3500 or, for TTY users, 711, 8 a.m.–8 p.m., 7 days a week from October 1 to February 14. From February 15 to September 30, hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday (messages received on holidays and outside of our business hours will be returned within one business day).