

Specialty Guideline Management

Epogen-Procrit-Retacrit

Products Referenced by this Document

Drugs that are listed in the following table include both brand and generic and all dosage forms and strengths unless otherwise stated. Over-the-counter (OTC) products are not included unless otherwise stated.

Brand Name	Generic Name
Epogen	epoetin alfa
Procrit	epoetin alfa
Retacrit	epoetin alfa-epbx

Indications

The indications below including FDA-approved indications and compendial uses are considered a covered benefit provided that all the approval criteria are met and the member has no exclusions to the prescribed therapy.

FDA-approved Indications¹⁻³

- Treatment of anemia due to chronic kidney disease (CKD), including patients on dialysis and not on dialysis to decrease the need for red blood cell (RBC) transfusion.
- Treatment of anemia due to zidovudine administered at less than or equal to 4200 milligrams (mg) per week in patients with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-infection with endogenous serum erythropoietin levels of less than or equal to 500 milliunits per milliliter (mUnits/mL).
- Treatment of anemia in patients with non-myeloid malignancies where anemia is due to the effect of concomitant myelosuppressive chemotherapy, and upon initiation, there is a minimum of two additional months of planned chemotherapy.
- To reduce the need for allogeneic RBC transfusions among patients with perioperative hemoglobin greater than 10 to less than or equal to 13 grams per deciliter (g/dL) who are at high

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risk for perioperative blood loss from elective, noncardiac, nonvascular surgery. Epoetin alfa is not indicated for patients who are willing to donate autologous blood preoperatively.

Compendial Uses

- Symptomatic anemia in patients with myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS)^{4,5,13,14,15}
- Anemia in patients who will not/cannot receive blood transfusions^{4,5,6}
- Myelofibrosis-associated anemia^{4,5,9}
- Cancer patients who are undergoing palliative treatment⁴

All other indications are considered experimental/investigational and not medically necessary.

Documentation

Submission of the following information is necessary to initiate the prior authorization review:

Continuation Requests

Chart notes, medical records, or laboratory results of current (within the last 30 days) hemoglobin level less than 12 g/dL (where applicable).

Coverage Criteria

Note: Requirements regarding pretreatment hemoglobin level exclude values due to a recent transfusion. All members must be assessed for iron deficiency anemia and have adequate iron stores (defined as a serum transferrin saturation [TSAT] level greater than or equal to 20% within the prior 3 months) or are receiving iron therapy before starting Epogen/Procrit/Retacrit. Members may not use Epogen/Procrit/Retacrit concomitantly with other erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (ESAs) or with hypoxia-inducible factor prolyl hydroxylase inhibitors (HIF-PHIs).

Anemia Due to Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)^{1-3,7}

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for treatment of anemia due to chronic kidney disease in members with pretreatment hemoglobin less than 10 g/dL.

Anemia Due to Myelosuppressive Chemotherapy^{1-3,8}

Authorization of 6 months may be granted for treatment of anemia due to myelosuppressive chemotherapy in members with non-myeloid malignancy and pretreatment hemoglobin less than 10 g/dL.

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Anemia in Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS)^{4,5,8,12-13}

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for treatment of anemia in myelodysplastic syndrome in members with pretreatment hemoglobin less than 10 g/dL.

Reduction of Allogeneic Red Blood Cell Transfusion in Patients Undergoing Elective, Noncardiac, Nonvascular Surgery¹⁻³

Authorization of 8 weeks may be granted for reduction of allogeneic red blood cell transfusion in members scheduled to have an elective, noncardiac, nonvascular surgery with pretreatment hemoglobin less than or equal to 13 g/dL.

Anemia Due to Zidovudine in HIV-infected Patients¹⁻³

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for treatment of anemia due to zidovudine in HIV-infected members currently receiving zidovudine with pretreatment hemoglobin less than 10 g/dL whose pretreatment serum erythropoietin (EPO) level is less than or equal to 500 mU/mL.

Anemia in Members Who Will Not/Cannot Receive Blood Transfusions^{4,5}

Authorization of 6 months may be granted for treatment of anemia in members who will not/cannot receive blood transfusions (e.g., religious beliefs) with pretreatment hemoglobin less than 10 g/dL.

Myelofibrosis-associated Anemia^{4,5,9,10}

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for treatment of myelofibrosis-associated anemia in members who meet both of the following criteria:

- Pretreatment hemoglobin less than 10 g/dL.
- Pretreatment serum EPO level less than 500 mU/mL.

Anemia Due to Cancer^{4,8}

Authorization of 6 months may be granted for treatment of anemia due to cancer in members who have cancer and are undergoing palliative treatment.

Continuation of Therapy

Note: Requirements regarding current hemoglobin level exclude values due to a recent transfusion. All members must be assessed for iron deficiency anemia and have adequate iron stores (defined as a serum transferrin saturation [TSAT] level greater than or equal to 20% within the prior 3 months) or are receiving

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iron therapy before continuation of treatment with Epogen/Procrit/Retacrit. Members may not use Epogen/Procrit/Retacrit concomitantly with other erythropoiesis stimulating agents or with hypoxia-inducible factor prolyl hydroxylase inhibitors (HIF-PHIs).

Anemia Due to CKD^{1-3,7}

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for continued treatment of anemia due to chronic kidney disease in members with current hemoglobin less than 12 g/dL.

Anemia Due to Myelosuppressive Chemotherapy^{1-3,8}

Authorization of 6 months may be granted for the continued treatment of anemia due to myelosuppressive chemotherapy in members with non-myeloid malignancy and current hemoglobin less than 12 g/dL.

Anemia in Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS)^{4,5,8,12,14}

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for continued treatment of anemia in myelodysplastic syndrome in members with current hemoglobin is less than 12 g/dL.

Reduction of Allogenic Red Blood Cell Transfusion in Patients Undergoing Elective, Noncardiac, Nonvascular Surgery¹⁻³

All members (including new members) requesting authorization for continuation of therapy must meet all initial authorization criteria.

Anemia Due to Zidovudine in HIV-infected Patients¹⁻³

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for continued treatment of anemia due to zidovudine in HIV-infected members receiving zidovudine with current hemoglobin less than 12 g/dL.

Anemia in Members Who Will Not/Cannot Receive Blood Transfusions⁵

Authorization of 6 months may be granted for continued treatment of anemia in members who will not/cannot receive blood transfusions (e.g., religious beliefs) with current hemoglobin less than 12 g/dL.

Myelofibrosis-associated Anemia^{4,5,9,10}

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for continued treatment of anemia in myelofibrosis-associated anemia with current hemoglobin less than 12 g/dL.

Anemia Due to Cancer⁴

Authorization of 6 months may be granted for continued treatment of anemia due to cancer in members who have cancer and are undergoing palliative treatment.

References

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9. National Comprehensive Cancer Network. NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology: Myeloproliferative Neoplasms. Version 2.2025. http://www.nccn.org/professionals/physician_gls/pdf/mpn.pdf. Accessed September 07, 2025.
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13. National Comprehensive Cancer Network. NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology: Myelodysplastic Syndromes. Version 2.2025. https://www.nccn.org/professionals/physician_gls/pdf/mds.pdf. Accessed September 10, 2025.