Evolent Clinical Guideline 3072 for Pegasys™ (peginterferon alfa-2a)

Guideline Number: Evolent_CG_3072	**Applicable Codes**	
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STATEMENT

Purpose

To define and describe the accepted indications for Pegasys (peginterferon alfa-2a) usage in the treatment of cancer, including FDA approved indications, and off-label indications.

Evolent is responsible for processing all medication requests from network ordering providers. Medications not authorized by Evolent may be deemed as not approvable and therefore not reimbursable.

The use of this drug must be supported by one of the following: FDA approved product labeling, CMS-approved compendia, National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) clinical guidelines, or peer-reviewed literature that meets the requirements of the CMS Medicare Benefit Policy Manual Chapter 15.

INDICATIONS

Continuation requests for a not-approvable medication shall be exempt from this Evolent policy provided

- The member has not experienced disease progression on the requested medication AND
- The requested medication was used within the last year without a lapse of more than 30 days of having an active authorization AND
- Additional medication(s) are not being added to the continuation request.

Myelofibrosis (PMF)

- Pegasys (peginterferon alfa-2a) may be used as first line or subsequent therapy for members with symptomatic lower-risk myelofibrosis. Please use table below to assess risk level of PMF.

RISK STRATIFICATION FOR PATIENTS WITH PMF

DYNAMIC INTERNATIONAL PROGNOSTIC SCORING SYSTEM (DIPSS)[1]

Prognostic Variable	Points		
	0	1	2
Age, y	≤65	>65	
White blood cell count, x10^9/L	≤25	>25	
Hemoglobin, g/dL	≥10		<10
Peripheral blood blast, %	<1	≥1	
Constitutional symptoms, Y/N	N	Y	

Risk Group	Points
Low	0
Intermediate-1 (INT-1)	1 or 2
Intermediate-2 (INT-2)	3 or 4
High	5 or 6

Online calculator for DIPSS score can be found at https://qxmd.com/calculate/calculator_187/dipss-prognosis-in-myelofibrosis

DIPSS-PLUS[2]

Prognostic Variable	Points
DIPSS low-risk	0
DIPSS intermediate-risk 1 (INT-1)	1
DIPSS intermediate-risk 2 (INT-2)	2
DIPSS high-risk	3
Platelets <100 x 10^9/L	1
Transfusion need	1
Unfavorable karyotype*	1

*Unfavorable karyotype: complex karyotype or sole or two abnormalities that include trisomy 8, -7/7q-, i(17q), -5/5q-, 12p-, inv(3), or 11q23 rearrangement.

Risk Group	Points
Low	0
Intermediate-1 (INT-1)	1
Intermediate-2 (INT-2)	2 or 3
High	4 to 6

Online calculator for DIPSS-PLUS score can be found at https://qxmd.com/calculate/calculator_315/dipss-plus-score-for-prognosis-in-myelofibrosis

Polycythemia Vera (PV)

- Pegasys (peginterferon alfa-2a) may be used as first line or subsequent therapy for members with symptomatic low-risk polycythemia vera or high-risk polycythemia vera. Please use table below to assess risk level of PV.

OVERALL SURVIVAL RISK STRATIFICATION FOR PATIENTS WITH POLYCYTHEMIA VERA[a]

MIPSS-PV

Prognostic Variable	Points
Thrombosis history	1
Leukocyte count ≥15x10^9/L	1
Age >67	2
Adverse mutations (SRSF2)	3

Risk Group	Points
Low	0–1
Intermediate	2–3
High	≥4

Essential Thrombocythemia (ET)

- Pegasys (peginterferon alfa-2a) may be used as first-line or subsequent therapy for

members with symptomatic very low-risk/low risk/intermediate risk or high-risk essential thrombocythemia. Please use table below to assess risk level of ET.

OVERALL SURVIVAL RISK STRATIFICATION FOR PATIENTS WITH ESSENTIAL THROMBOCYTHEMIA[a]

MIPSS-ET

Prognostic Variable	Points
Male sex	1
Leukocyte count ≥11 x 10^9/L	1
Adverse mutations (SRSF2, SF3B1, U2AF1, TP53)	2
Age >60	4

Risk Group	Points
Low	0–1
Intermediate	2–5
High	≥6

CONTRAINDICATIONS/WARNINGS

- Contraindications
  - Autoimmune hepatitis
  - Hepatic decompensation in patients with cirrhosis
  - Use in neonates/infants
  - Known hypersensitivity reactions such as urticaria, angioedema, bronchoconstriction and anaphylaxis to alpha interferons or any component of the product
- US Boxed Warning
  - Risk of Serious Disorders
    - May cause or aggravate fatal or life-threatening neuropsychiatric, autoimmune, ischemic, and infectious disorders. Monitor closely and withdraw therapy with persistently severe or worsening signs or symptoms of the above disorders.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

- Disease progression while taking Pegasys (peginterferon alfa-2a).
- Concurrent use with other anticancer therapies.
- Dosing exceeds single dose limit of 180 mcg.
- Investigational use of Pegasys (peginterferon alfa-2a) with an off-label indication that is

not sufficient in evidence or is not generally accepted by the medical community. Sufficient evidence that is not supported by CMS recognized compendia or acceptable peer reviewed literature is defined as any of the following:

- Whether the clinical characteristics of the patient and the cancer are adequately represented in the published evidence.
- Whether the administered chemotherapy/biologic therapy/immune therapy/targeted therapy/other oncologic therapy regimen is adequately represented in the published evidence.
- Whether the reported study outcomes represent clinically meaningful outcomes experienced by patients. Generally, the definitions of Clinically Meaningful outcomes are those recommended by ASCO, e.g., Hazard Ratio of < 0.80 and the recommended survival benefit for OS and PFS should be at least 3 months.
- Whether the experimental design, considering the drugs and conditions under investigation, is appropriate to address the investigative question. (For example, in some clinical studies, it may be unnecessary or not feasible to use randomization, double blind trials, placebos, or crossover).
- That non-randomized clinical trials with a significant number of subjects may be a basis for supportive clinical evidence for determining accepted uses of drugs.
- That case reports are generally considered uncontrolled and anecdotal information and do not provide adequate supportive clinical evidence for determining accepted uses of drugs.
- That abstracts (including meeting abstracts) without the full article from the approved peer-reviewed journals lack supporting clinical evidence for determining accepted uses of drugs.

CODING AND STANDARDS

Codes

- J3590 - peginterferon alfa-2a

Applicable Lines of Business

☐	CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program)
☒	Commercial
☒	Exchange/Marketplace
☒	Medicaid
☐	Medicare Advantage

POLICY HISTORY

Date	Summary
April 2026	• Updated risk levels and risk level tables in indication section • Updated references
April 2025	• Converted to new Evolent guideline template • This guideline replaces UM ONC_1497 Pegasys (peginterferon alfa-2a)
April 2024	• New policy

LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE

Guideline Approval

Committee

Reviewed / Approved by Evolent Specialty Services Clinical Guideline Review Committee

Disclaimer

Evolent Clinical Guidelines do not constitute medical advice. Treating health care professionals are solely responsible for diagnosis, treatment, and medical advice. Evolent uses Clinical Guidelines in accordance with its contractual obligations to provide utilization management. Coverage for services varies for individual members according to the terms of their health care coverage or government program. Individual members' health care coverage may not utilize some Evolent Clinical Guidelines. Evolent clinical guidelines contain guidance that requires prior authorization and service limitations. A list of procedure codes, services or drugs may not be all inclusive and does not imply that a service or drug is a covered or non-covered service or drug. Evolent reserves the right to review and update this Clinical Guideline in its sole discretion. Notice of any changes shall be provided as required by applicable provider agreements and laws or regulations. Members should contact their Plan customer service representative for specific coverage information.

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