

Clinical Policy: Ponesimod (Ponvory)

Reference Number: CP.PHAR.537

Effective Date: 06.01.21

Last Review Date: 05.25

Line of Business: Commercial, HIM, Medicaid

[Revision Log](#)

See [Important Reminder](#) at the end of this policy for important regulatory and legal information.

Description

Ponesimod (Ponvory[®]) is a sphingosine 1-phosphate receptor modulator.

FDA Approved Indication(s)

Ponvory is indicated for the treatment of relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis (MS), to include clinically isolated syndrome, relapsing-remitting disease, and active secondary progressive disease, in adults.

Policy/Criteria

Provider must submit documentation (such as office chart notes, lab results or other clinical information) supporting that member has met all approval criteria.

It is the policy of health plans affiliated with Centene Corporation[®] that Ponvory is **medically necessary** when the following criteria are met:

I. Initial Approval Criteria**A. Multiple Sclerosis (must meet all):**

1. Diagnosis of one of the following (a, b, or c):
 - a. Clinically isolated syndrome, and member is contraindicated to both, or has experienced clinically significant adverse effects to one, of the following at up to maximally indicated doses: an **interferon-beta agent** (Avonex[®], Betaseron[®]/Extavia^{®†}, Rebif[®], or Plegridy[®]), **glatiramer** (Copaxone[®], Glatopa[®]);[^]
[^]For Illinois HIM requests, the step therapy requirements above do not apply as of 1/1/2026 per IL HB 5395
 - b. Relapsing-remitting MS, and failure of all of the following at up to maximally indicated doses, unless clinically significant adverse effects are experienced or all are contraindicated (i, ii, iii, and iv):[^]
[^]For Illinois HIM requests, the step therapy requirements below do not apply as of 1/1/2026 per IL HB 5395
 - i. **Dimethyl fumarate** (generic Tecfidera[®]);
 - ii. **Teriflunomide** (generic Aubagio[®]);
 - iii. **Fingolimod** (Gilenya[®]);
 - iv. An **interferon-beta agent** (Avonex, Betaseron/Extavia[†], Rebif, or Plegridy) or **glatiramer** (Copaxone, Glatopa);
- c. Secondary progressive MS;

^{*}Prior authorization may be required for all disease modifying therapies for MS

[†]Betaseron is the preferred interferon beta-1b product for the Commercial and HIM lines of business

2. Prescribed by or in consultation with a neurologist;
3. Age $\geq$ 18 years;
4. Ponvory is not prescribed concurrently with other disease modifying therapies for MS (*see Appendix D*);
5. Request meets the following:
 - a. Treatment initiation: Dose follows the 14-day titration schedule as outlined in Section V and does not exceed 1 tablet per day;
 - b. Treatment maintenance: Dose does not exceed (i and ii):
 - i. 20 mg per day;
 - ii. 1 tablet per day.

Approval duration: 6 months

B. Other diagnoses/indications (must meet 1 or 2):

1. If this drug has recently (within the last 6 months) undergone a label change (e.g., newly approved indication, age expansion, new dosing regimen) that is not yet reflected in this policy, refer to one of the following policies (a or b):
 - a. For drugs on the formulary (commercial, health insurance marketplace) or PDL (Medicaid), the no coverage criteria policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.190 for commercial, HIM.PA.33 for health insurance marketplace, and CP.PMN.255 for Medicaid; or
 - b. For drugs NOT on the formulary (commercial, health insurance marketplace) or PDL (Medicaid), the non-formulary policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.190 for commercial, HIM.PA.103 for health insurance marketplace, and CP.PMN.16 for Medicaid; or
2. If the requested use (e.g., diagnosis, age, dosing regimen) is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized) AND criterion 1 above does not apply, refer to the off-label use policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.09 for commercial, HIM.PA.154 for health insurance marketplace, and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid.

II. Continued Therapy

A. Multiple Sclerosis (must meet all):

1. Member meets one of the following (a or b):
 - a. Currently receiving medication via Centene benefit or member has previously met initial approval criteria;
 - b. Member is currently receiving medication and is enrolled in a state and product with continuity of care regulations (*refer to state specific addendums for CC.PHARM.03A and CC.PHARM.03B*);
2. Member is responding positively to therapy;
3. Ponvory is not prescribed concurrently with other disease modifying therapies for MS (*see Appendix D*);
4. If request is for a dose increase, new dose does not exceed (a and b):
 - a. 20 mg per day;
 - b. 1 tablet per day.

Approval duration: 12 months

B. Other diagnoses/indications (must meet 1 or 2):

1. If this drug has recently (within the last 6 months) undergone a label change (e.g., newly approved indication, age expansion, new dosing regimen) that is not yet reflected in this policy, refer to one of the following policies (a or b):
 - a. For drugs on the formulary (commercial, health insurance marketplace) or PDL (Medicaid), the no coverage criteria policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.190 for commercial, HIM.PA.33 for health insurance marketplace, and CP.PMN.255 for Medicaid; or
 - b. For drugs NOT on the formulary (commercial, health insurance marketplace) or PDL (Medicaid), the non-formulary policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.190 for commercial, HIM.PA.103 for health insurance marketplace, and CP.PMN.16 for Medicaid; or
2. If the requested use (e.g., diagnosis, age, dosing regimen) is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized) AND criterion 1 above does not apply, refer to the off-label use policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.09 for commercial, HIM.PA.154 for health insurance marketplace, and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid.

III. Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized:

- A. Non-FDA approved indications, which are not addressed in this policy, unless there is sufficient documentation of efficacy and safety according to the off label use policies – CP.CPA.09 for commercial, HIM.PA.154 for health insurance marketplace, and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid or evidence of coverage documents;
- B. Primary progressive MS.

IV. Appendices/General Information

Appendix A: Abbreviation/Acronym Key

FDA: Food and Drug Administration

MS: multiple sclerosis

Appendix B: Therapeutic Alternatives

This table provides a listing of preferred alternative therapy recommended in the approval criteria. The drugs listed here may not be a formulary agent for all relevant lines of business and may require prior authorization.

Drug Name	Dosing Regimen	Dose Limit/ Maximum Dose
teriflunomide (Aubagio [®])	7 mg or 14 mg PO QD	14 mg/day
Avonex [®] , Rebif [®] (interferon beta-1a)	Avonex: 30 mcg IM Q week Rebif: 22 mcg or 44 mcg SC TIW	Avonex: 30 mcg/week Rebif: 44 mcg TIW
Betaseron [®] , Extavia [®] (interferon beta-1b)	250 mcg SC QOD	250 mg QOD
Plegridy [®] (peginterferon beta-1a)	125 mcg SC Q2 weeks	125 mcg/2 weeks
glatiramer acetate (Copaxone [®] , Glatopa [®])	20 mg SC QD or 40 mg SC TIW	20 mg/day or 40 mg TIW
fingolimod (Gilenya [®])	0.5 mg PO QD	0.5 mg/day

Drug Name	Dosing Regimen	Dose Limit/ Maximum Dose
dimethyl fumarate (Tecfidera®)	120 mg PO BID for 7 days, followed by 240 mg PO BID	480 mg/day

Therapeutic alternatives are listed as Brand name® (generic) when the drug is available by brand name only and generic (Brand name®) when the drug is available by both brand and generic.

Appendix C: Contraindications/Boxed Warnings

- Contraindication(s): in the last 6 months, experienced myocardial infarction, unstable angina, stroke, transient ischemic attack, decompensated heart failure requiring hospitalization, or Class III or IV heart failure; presence of Mobitz type II second-degree, third-degree atrioventricular block, sick sinus syndrome, or sino-atrial block, unless patient has a functioning pacemaker
- Boxed warning(s): none reported

Appendix D: General Information

- Disease-modifying therapies for MS are: glatiramer acetate (Copaxone®, Glatopa®), interferon beta-1a (Avonex®, Rebif®), interferon beta-1b (Betaseron®, Extavia®), peginterferon beta-1a (Plegridy®), dimethyl fumarate (Tecfidera®), diroximel fumarate (Vumerity®), monomethyl fumarate (Bafiertam™), fingolimod (Gilenya®, Tascenso ODT™), teriflunomide (Aubagio®), alemtuzumab (Lemtrada®), mitoxantrone (Novantrone®), natalizumab (Tysabri®, and biosimilar Tyruko®), ocrelizumab (Ocrevus®), ocrelizumab/hyaluronidase-ocsq (Ocrevus Zunovo™), siponimod (Mayzent®), cladribine (Mavenclad®), ozanimod (Zeposia®), ofatumumab (Kesimpta®), ublituximab-xiiy (Briumvi™), and ponesimod (Ponvory™).
- Of the disease-modifying therapies for MS that are FDA-labeled for clinically isolated syndrome, only the interferon products, glatiramer, and teriflunomide have demonstrated any efficacy in decreasing the risk of conversion to MS compared to placebo. This is supported by the American Academy of Neurology 2018 MS guidelines.

V. Dosage and Administration

Indication	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
MS	<u>Treatment initiation:</u> • Days 1 and 2: 2 mg PO QD • Days 3 and 4: 3 mg PO QD • Days 5 and 6: 4 mg PO QD • Day 7: 5 mg PO QD • Day 8: 6 mg PO QD • Day 9: 7 mg PO QD • Day 10: 8 mg PO QD • Day 11: 9 mg PO QD • Day 12, 13, and 14: 10 mg PO QD <u>Treatment maintenance:</u> • Day 15 and thereafter: 20 mg PO QD	20 mg/day

Indication	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
	<u>Missed doses:</u> - If fewer than 4 consecutive doses are missed: - During titration: Resume treatment with the first missed titration dose and resume the titration schedule at that dose and titration day. - During maintenance: Resume treatment with the maintenance dosage. - If 4 or more consecutive doses are missed during titration or maintenance: - Treatment should be reinitiated with Day 1 of the titration regimen (new starter pack).	

VI. Product Availability

- Tablets, starter pack: 2 mg, 3 mg, 4 mg, 5 mg, 6 mg, 7 mg, 8 mg, 9 mg, 10 mg
- Tablets, maintenance dose bottle: 20 mg

VII. References

- Ponvory Prescribing Information. Titusville, NJ: Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.; October 2024. Available at: <https://www.ponvory.com>. Accessed January 24, 2025.
- Rae-Grant A, Day GS, Marrie RA, et al. Practice guideline recommendations summary: disease-modifying therapies for adults with multiple sclerosis: report of the Guideline Development, Dissemination, and Implementation Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology. *Neurology*. 2018; 90(17): 777-788. Full guideline available at: <https://www.aan.com/Guidelines/home/GetGuidelineContent/898>. Reaffirmed on October 19, 2024.

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	P&T Approval Date
Policy created	03.24.21	05.21
2Q 2022 annual review: no significant changes; clarified interferon-beta product redirections for each line of business per SDC; references reviewed and updated.	02.08.22	05.22
Template changes applied to other diagnoses/indications and continued therapy section.	10.05.22	
2Q 2023 annual review: no significant changes; to be inclusive of members continuing therapy from a different benefit, revised continued approval duration to reference the duration of total treatment received rather than the number of re-authorizations; references reviewed and updated.	01.31.23	05.23
Per August SDC, added generic references to Aubagio and Gilenya redirections.	08.22.23	11.23
2Q 2024 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	01.30.24	05.24

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	P&T Approval Date
2Q 2025 annual review: per competitor analysis, removed requirements for documentation of baseline relapses/expanded disability status score and specific measures of positive response; per SDC, removed notation that Extavia is the preferred interferon beta-1b product for the Medicaid line of business as it is no longer available on market; for continued therapy, modified approval duration from “if member has received < 1 year of total treatment – up to a total of 12 months of treatment and if member has received ≥ 1 year of total treatment – 12 months” to “12 months”; references reviewed and updated.	02.12.25	05.25
Added step therapy bypass for IL HIM per IL HB 5395.	06.25.25	

Important Reminder

This clinical policy has been developed by appropriately experienced and licensed health care professionals based on a review and consideration of currently available generally accepted standards of medical practice; peer-reviewed medical literature; government agency/program approval status; evidence-based guidelines and positions of leading national health professional organizations; views of physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas affected by this clinical policy; and other available clinical information. The Health Plan makes no representations and accepts no liability with respect to the content of any external information used or relied upon in developing this clinical policy. This clinical policy is consistent with standards of medical practice current at the time that this clinical policy was approved. “Health Plan” means a health plan that has adopted this clinical policy and that is operated or administered, in whole or in part, by Centene Management Company, LLC, or any of such health plan’s affiliates, as applicable.

The purpose of this clinical policy is to provide a guide to medical necessity, which is a component of the guidelines used to assist in making coverage decisions and administering benefits. It does not constitute a contract or guarantee regarding payment or results. Coverage decisions and the administration of benefits are subject to all terms, conditions, exclusions, and limitations of the coverage documents (e.g., evidence of coverage, certificate of coverage, policy, contract of insurance, etc.), as well as to state and federal requirements and applicable Health Plan-level administrative policies and procedures.

This clinical policy is effective as of the date determined by the Health Plan. The date of posting may not be the effective date of this clinical policy. This clinical policy may be subject to applicable legal and regulatory requirements relating to provider notification. If there is a discrepancy between the effective date of this clinical policy and any applicable legal or regulatory requirement, the requirements of law and regulation shall govern. The Health Plan retains the right to change, amend or withdraw this clinical policy, and additional clinical policies may be developed and adopted as needed, at any time.

This clinical policy does not constitute medical advice, medical treatment, or medical care. It is not intended to dictate to providers how to practice medicine. Providers are expected to exercise

professional medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care, and are solely responsible for the medical advice and treatment of members. This clinical policy is not intended to recommend treatment for members. Members should consult with their treating physician in connection with diagnosis and treatment decisions.

Providers referred to in this clinical policy are independent contractors who exercise independent judgment and over whom the Health Plan has no control or right of control. Providers are not agents or employees of the Health Plan.

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Note:

For Medicaid members, when state Medicaid coverage provisions conflict with the coverage provisions in this clinical policy, state Medicaid coverage provisions take precedence. Please refer to the state Medicaid manual for any coverage provisions pertaining to this clinical policy.

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