

Clinical Policy: Alosetron (Lotronex)

Reference Number: CP.PMN.153

Effective Date: 11.16.16

Last Review Date: 02.22

Line of Business: Commercial, Medicaid

[Revision Log](#)

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

Description

Alosetron (Lotronex[®]) is a selective serotonin 5-HT₃ antagonist.

FDA Approved Indication(s)

Lotronex is indicated only for women with severe diarrhea-predominant irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) who have:

- Chronic IBS symptoms (generally lasting 6 months or longer)
- Had anatomic or biochemical abnormalities of the gastrointestinal tract excluded, and
- Not responded adequately to conventional therapy

Diarrhea-predominant IBS is severe if it includes diarrhea and 1 or more of the following:

- Frequent and severe abdominal pain/discomfort
- Frequent bowel urgency or fecal incontinence
- Disability or restriction of daily activities due to IBS

Limitation(s) of use:

- Because of infrequent but serious gastrointestinal adverse reactions associated with Lotronex, the indication is restricted to those patients for whom the benefit-to-risk balance is most favorable.
- Clinical studies have not been performed to adequately confirm the benefits of Lotronex in men.

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 Lotronex is **medically necessary** when the following criteria are met:

I. Initial Approval Criteria

A. Irritable Bowel Syndrome – Diarrhea (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of diarrhea-predominant IBS;
2. Age \geq 18 years;
3. Failure of an anti-diarrheal agent (e.g., loperamide) at up to maximally indicated doses, unless clinically significant adverse effects are experienced or all are contraindicated;

4. Failure of an antispasmodic agent (e.g., dicyclomine) at up to maximally indicated doses, unless clinically significant adverse effects are experienced or all are contraindicated;
5. Dose does not exceed 2 mg (2 tablets) per day.

Approval duration:

Medicaid – 12 months

Commercial – 12 months or duration of request, whichever is less

B. Other diagnoses/indications

1. Refer to the off-label use policy for the relevant line of business if diagnosis is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized): CP.CPA.09 for commercial and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid.

II. Continued Therapy

A. Irritable Bowel Syndrome – Diarrhea (must meet all):

1. Currently receiving medication via Centene benefit or member has previously met initial approval criteria;
2. Member is responding positively to therapy;
3. If request is for a dose increase, new dose does not exceed 2 mg (2 tablets) per day.

Approval duration:

Medicaid – 12 months

Commercial – 12 months or duration of request, whichever is less

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

1. Currently receiving medication via Centene benefit and documentation supports positive response to therapy.

Approval duration: Duration of request or 12 months (whichever is less); or

2. Refer to the off-label use policy for the relevant line of business if diagnosis is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized): CP.CPA.09 for commercial 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 and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid, or evidence of coverage documents.

IV. Appendices/General Information

Appendix A: Abbreviation/Acronym Key

FDA: Food and Drug Administration

IBS: irritable bowel syndrome

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
loperamide (Imodium A-D [®])	Adults: 4 mg PO followed by 2 mg after each unformed stool until diarrhea is resolved; then individualize dose. Administer optimal daily dose (4-8 mg) as single or divided doses.	If no clinical improvement after treatment with 16 mg/day for at least 10 days, symptoms are unlikely to be controlled by further use.
diphenoxylate/atropine (Lomotil [®])	Initially, 5 mg (2 tablets) PO QID; Discontinue after 10 days if clinical improvement is not observed	20 mg/day (of diphenoxylate)
dicyclomine (Bentyl [®])	Adults: 20 mg PO QID up to 1 week, then increase to 40 mg PO QID	160 mg/day (40 mg PO QID)
hyoscyamine (Levsin [®] , Levbid [®])	Adults: Levsin: 0.125 – 0.25 mg PO Q 4h Levbid: 0.375 – 0.75 mg PO Q 12h	1.5 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):
 - Lotronex should not be initiated in patients with constipation
 - History of chronic or severe constipation or sequelae from constipation; intestinal obstruction, stricture, toxic megacolon, gastrointestinal perforation, and/or adhesions; ischemic colitis; impaired intestinal circulation, thrombophlebitis, or hypercoagulable state; Crohn’s disease or ulcerative colitis; diverticulitis; severe hepatic impairment
 - Concomitant use of fluvoxamine
- Boxed warning(s): serious gastrointestinal adverse reactions (including ischemic colitis and serious complications of constipation) have resulted in hospitalization and rarely, blood transfusion, surgery, and death

Appendix D: General Information

- Commercially available Lotronex is prescribed and distributed under a restricted distribution program, which is intended to control its access and to educate program participants (clinicians, pharmacists, patients) about the risks and benefits of the drug. The Lotronex REMS program was implemented to help reduce the risks of a serious gastrointestinal (GI) adverse event and to ensure the benefits of the drug outweigh the risk.
- One study of 662 men with diarrhea-predominant IBS showed Lotronex 1 mg twice daily provided a significantly higher average rate of adequate relief of IBS pain and discomfort during weeks 5-12 of the treatment phase (primary endpoint) compared to placebo.

V. Dosage and Administration

Indication	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
IBS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting dose is 0.5 mg PO BID May increase dose to 1 mg BID after 4 weeks if starting dosage is well tolerated but does not adequately control IBS symptoms Discontinue Lotronex in patients who have not had adequate control of IBS symptoms after 4 weeks of treatment with 1 mg BID 	2 mg/day

VI. Product Availability

Tablets: 0.5 mg, 1 mg

VII. References

1. Lotronex Prescribing Information. Roswell, GA: Sebela Pharmaceuticals Inc.; April 2019. Available at: <https://lotronex.com/>. Accessed August 6, 2021.
2. Weinberg DS, Smalley W, Heidelbaugh JJ, Shahnaz S. American Gastroenterological Association Institute guideline on the pharmacological management of irritable bowel syndrome. *Gastroenterology*. 2014; 147(5): 1146-1149. Available at: [https://www.gastrojournal.org/article/S0016-5085\(14\)01089-0/pdf](https://www.gastrojournal.org/article/S0016-5085(14)01089-0/pdf).
3. Chey WD, Chey WY, Heath AT, et al. Long-term safety and efficacy of alosetron in women with severe diarrhea-predominant irritable bowel syndrome. *Am J Gastroenterol*. 2004;99(11):2195-203.
4. Chang L, Ameen VZ, Dukes GE, et al. A dose-ranging, phase II study of the efficacy and safety of alosetron in men with diarrhea-predominant IBS. *Am J Gastroenterol*. 2005;100(1):115-23.
5. Micromedex[®] Healthcare Series [Internet database]. Greenwood Village, Colo: Thomson Healthcare. Updated periodically. Accessed August 6, 2021.
6. Clinical Pharmacology [database online]. Tampa, FL: Gold Standard, Inc.; 2020. Available at: <http://www.clinicalpharmacology-ip.com/>.

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	P&T Approval Date
3Q 2018 annual review: new policy for Medicaid line of business; added age requirement; removed requirements related to confirmation of diagnosis since they are subjective measures, physician enrollment in the prescribing program for Lotronex and patient acknowledgement form, and exclusion of anatomic or biochemical abnormalities of the GI tract; removed conventional therapy (e.g., psyllium (Metamucil) as a requirement; references reviewed and updated.	05.08.18	08.18
4Q 2018 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	07.19.18	11.18
4Q 2019 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	08.13.19	11.19

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	P&T Approval Date
4Q2020 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	06.26.20	11.20
4Q 2021 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	08.06.21	11.21
Revised approval duration for Commercial line of business from length of benefit to 12 months or duration of request, whichever is less	10.18.21	02.22

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.

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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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