

Paxlovid™ and Remdesivir Eligibility Criteria Update

Effective August 30, 2022, the eligibility criteria for Paxlovid™ and remdesivir has been expanded to include an additional course of therapy for new and distinct COVID-19 infections in eligible patients.

Surveillance is showing that recurrent COVID-19 infections are possible with the BA.5 and other Omicron subvariants and some patients that recovered from a previous COVID-19 infection are experiencing reinfections. As a result, the Ministry of Health has approved the recommendations made by the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) Specialized Early COVID Therapeutics Team to expand usage of COVID-19 therapeutics, Paxlovid™ and remdesivir.

The Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch (DPEBB) will now pay pharmacies for prescribing and/or dispensing Paxlovid™ to eligible individuals with a new and distinct COVID-19 infection who:

- Had a previous COVID-19 infection:
 - At least 90 days have elapsed since symptoms from previous infection have resolved
- Previous treatment with an early COVID-19 therapeutic (i.e., Paxlovid™, remdesivir or sotrovimab):
 - Eligible for a second course of an early COVID-19 antiviral (i.e., Paxlovid™ or remdesivir) provided at least 90 days have elapsed since symptoms from previous infection have resolved.

Patients are eligible for a **maximum of TWO (2) courses** of antiviral treatment with Paxlovid™ and/or remdesivir; only Paxlovid™ is eligible for payment through the DPEBB.

Prescribers must use clinical judgement to confirm that the presenting COVID-19 infection is new and distinct compared to a previously confirmed COVID-19 infection.

- Rapid Antigen (RAT) and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests may not be an accurate indication of a new and distinct infection if the patient previously had COVID-19, therefore it must be confirmed that 90 days have elapsed since complete COVID-19 symptom resolution for the individual to be eligible for an additional course.

Complex cases may be referred to the SHA Specialized Early COVID Therapeutics Team for assessment.

The *Paxlovid Distribution Prescribing and Assessment Phase 2 – Process and Billing Instructions and Pharmacy FAQs #2 – Paxlovid* (Aug. 30, 2022) has been updated to reflect these changes and will be found on the Secure Drug Plan website and Formulary website at: <https://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/COVIDImmunizationProgram>.

Pharmacies are eligible for the following fees (note the addition of Billing Thresholds):

Service	pseudoDIN/DIN	Fee	Billing Thresholds
Minor Ailment Fee: Covid-19 (Paxlovid™) (MAF-P)	00951375	\$18.00	Maximum of TWO (2) claims. Must be submitted as a quantity of one (1).
*Paxlovid™ Ineligibility/Referral Assessment Fee: Pharmacist Prescriber (IRAF-P)	00951376	\$18.00	Maximum of four (4) claims every 365 days Must be submitted as a quantity of one (1).
*Paxlovid™ Ineligibility/Referral Assessment Fee: Other Prescribers (IRAF-O)	00951377	\$18.00	Maximum of four (4) claims every 365 days Must be submitted as a quantity of one (1).
*Paxlovid™ Distribution Fee (PDF)	02524031	\$20.00	Maximum of TWO (2) claims. Must be submitted as a quantity of one (1).

**These fees are unique to Paxlovid™ and are not eligible in conjunction with any other DPEBB professional service programs.*

Prescribing and eligibility resources for Paxlovid™ have been updated by medSask and can be found on their website: <https://medsask.usask.ca/professional-practice/paxlovid-hcp/prescribing-paxlovid-for-covid-19.php>. medSask will also be able to assist you over the phone (1-800-667-3425 or 306-966-6340 in Saskatoon) or via e-mail (druginfo@usask.ca).

For more information on COVID-19 treatments and eligibility go to: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/testing-information/covid-19-treatments>.

Reminder

Pharmacies interested in prescribing or distributing Paxlovid™ can register with the DPEBB by emailing DPEBimmunizations@health.gov.sk.ca

Who to Call:

If you or your patients have any questions, please contact:

- Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch at 306-787-3317 (Regina) or 1-800-667-7581. Pharmacists may also email DPEBimmunizations@health.gov.sk.ca.