

In response to the findings of federal and international health authorities, Geisinger Health Plan is committing to help stem the increasing resistance to antibiotics.

Geisinger Health Plan will closely monitor antibiotic treatment for the following diagnoses: acute bronchitis, pharyngitis and upper respiratory infections (URIs).

Additional information may be requested for these diagnoses, based on the criteria below. Correct coding and the including pertinent medical documentation will help expedite claims processing and reimbursement.

Acute Bronchitis

The American College of Physicians does not recommend antibiotic treatment for individuals presenting with uncomplicated acute bronchitis who are otherwise healthy.

Geisinger Health Plan will request additional information for claims that meet both of the following criteria

- Reported diagnosis code of 466.0 – acute bronchitis
- Presence of an antibiotic prescription filled within 72 hours of the date of service

If you receive a denial based on these criteria, please review your medical record to ensure that the claim has been coded to the highest level of specificity and resubmit, if appropriate. The member may not be held financially liable for denials of this nature.

Pharyngitis

The American Board of Internal Medicine's Choosing Wisely campaign recommends avoiding antibiotics to treat viral illnesses (e.g., sinusitis, pharyngitis, bronchitis). In most cases, the presence of a bacterial infection in individuals diagnosed with pharyngitis should be verified with a Group A streptococcus test before antibiotics are considered.

Geisinger Health Plan will request additional information for claims that meet both of the following criteria

- Reported diagnosis code of 034.0 – streptococcal sore throat/tonsillitis, 462 – acute pharyngitis or 463 acute tonsillitis
- No indication of a strep test
- Presence of an antibiotic prescription filled within 72 hours of the date of service

At times it may be clinically appropriate to prescribe an antibiotic without obtaining a strep test, for example, when a child presents with scarlatina or has a sibling with a confirmed strep

infection. In this instance, please consider using 034.1 – scarlet fever when ordering an antibiotic without administering a strep test.

Upper respiratory infections (URIs)

The CDC has stated that inappropriate prescriptions of antibiotics for pharyngitis and other URIs are major contributors to antibiotic resistance and are usually unnecessary for treatment of URIs.

Geisinger Health Plan will request additional information for claims that meet both of the following criteria

- Pediatric member office visit
- Reported diagnosis code of 460, 465.0, 465.8 or 465.9
- Presence of an antibiotic prescription filled within 72 hours of the date of service

If you receive a denial based on these criteria, please review your medical record to ensure that the claim has been coded to the highest level of specificity and resubmit, if appropriate.

Geisinger Health Plan, Geisinger Indemnity Insurance Company and Geisinger Quality Options, Inc. are collectively referred to as "GHP" in this summary.

All rights, duties and responsibilities of participating providers will be applied according to the following document order: 1) member's benefit document; 2) the participating provider's contract agreement; 3) the GHP Family Provider Guide; and 4) the Geisinger Health Plan Provider Guide.

Publication history: