

Drug Name	Indication	Potential Plan Impact
Faslodex 50mg/mL pre-filled syringe	Hormonal treatment of advanced breast cancer in postmenopausal women	\$\$
Caduet tablets	Combination therapy of an antihypertensive and lipid metabolism agent	\$
	\$ Little increase estimated in drug plan expenditure	
	\$\$ Drug plan expenditure estimated to be somewhat increased	
	\$\$\$ Potential for large increase in drug plan expenditure	

Enbrel – Another treatment for psoriasis

Enbrel's newest indication is for chronic moderate to severe plaque psoriasis. It already has indications for different types of rheumatoid arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis. The new strength of 50mg in a pre-filled syringe has been introduced for use in the treatment of psoriasis.

Psoriasis is a chronic inflammatory condition characterized by thick, itchy, red, scaly skin lesions that mostly appear on the scalp, elbows, knees, hands, feet and genital areas¹. It affects about 2% of the world's population². In Canada, this translates to about 650,000 patients. Men and women are equally affected. Symptoms appear between the ages of 15 to 20 years, with a second peak between 55 and 60 years of age.

The severity of psoriasis ranges from mild to severe. Approximately one-third of those with psoriasis have a moderate-to-severe form of the disease³. The mainstay for the treatment of the mild form of psoriasis is topical therapy such as emollients, salicylic acid, corticosteroids, vitamin D analogs (e.g. Dovonex), tars, etc. For patients with moderate to severe psoriasis, phototherapy (ultraviolet light A or B) or systemic therapy (e.g. methotrexate, cyclosporine, etc.) is used, after failing treatment with topical therapy.

The newest agents in the treatment of psoriasis are the biologicals like Enbrel, Amevive and Raptiva. The biologicals are drugs that specifically target the underlying process of psoriasis i.e. they are believed to act by affecting the proinflammatory activities of the body's autoimmune system. Biological agents are typically administered by injection or infusion in outpatient clinics. Enbrel's recommended dosing is 50mg subcutaneously twice weekly for 3 months, followed by a reduction to a maintenance dose of 50mg per week. A package of 4x50mg Enbrel pre-filled syringes costs \$1,414. At the recommended dosing, Enbrel's annual cost would be about \$21, 200. Comparatively, the annual cost of treatment with systemic agents is about \$329 for methotrexate and about \$3000 per year for cyclosporine.

Therefore, for clients who have adopted ClaimSecure's **Managed Formularies**, the drug will be placed under **Special Authorization**. The Special Authorization program provides plan sponsors with a tool to ensure that psoriasis patients meet ClaimSecure's clinical guidelines for use. Approvals will be authorized for adult patients with moderate to severe chronic plaque psoriasis with at least 10% body involvement and who have tried and failed phototherapy and have tried and failed and/or are intolerant to at least 2 systemic therapies and are being treated by a dermatologist. However, for group plans with open formularies, Enbrel will automatically be covered. *If you require additional information about Enbrel, please contact Shellina Sevani in ClaimSecure's Clinical Services Department at (905) 949-3025 or 1-888-479-7587 ext.3025.*

Recommendation: Special Authorization

ClaimSecure reserves the right to amend in part or in its entirety stated special authorization clinical guidelines

References:

- American Academy of Dermatology. What is Psoriasis? <http://www.skincarephysicians.com/psoriasisnet/whats.html>. Accessed February 14, 2006.
- Langley RGB, Krueger GG, Griffiths CEM. Psoriasis: epidemiology, clinical features, and quality of life. *Ann Rheum Dis* 2005; 64 (suppl II): ii18-ii23.
- Guenther L *et al.* Integrating Biologic Agents into Management of Moderate-to-Severe Psoriasis: A Consensus of the Canadian Psoriasis Expert Panel. *J Cutan Med Surg* 2004; 321-337.

