

CHAMPVA POLICY MANUAL

CHAPTER: 2
SECTION: 30.8
TITLE: IMMUNOSUPPRESSION THERAPY

AUTHORITY: 38 USC 1713; 38 CFR 17.270(a) and 17.272(a)

RELATED AUTHORITY: 32 CFR 199.4(b)(2)(v), (b)(3)(iii), (b)(5)(v), and (d)(3)(vii).

TRICARE POLICY MANUAL: Chapter 7, Section 7.3

I. EFFECTIVE DATE

A. Benefits are effective on the date the immunosuppressive agent being used became FDA approved for general use in humans, or;

B. On the date it became FDA approved or indicated for the condition for which it is being used to treat (reference paragraph C. under POLICY below).

II. DESCRIPTION

Immunosuppressive drugs are used to control rejection reaction(s) caused by antigenic differences resulting from tissue typing and donor matching. Because immunosuppression therapy is essential to successful organ transplantation, rarely, if ever, will transplant patients be able to stop using this therapy. Immunosuppression therapy is also used to treat medical conditions other than transplantation.

III. POLICY

A. Benefits are allowed for immunosuppression therapy following a covered organ (i.e., heart, liver, heart-lung, lung, kidney, liver-kidney, cornea) or bone marrow transplant (see [Chapter 2, Section 31.10](#), *High Dose Chemotherapy And Stem Cell Transplantation*).

B. The immunosuppressive agent must be Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved for the specific type of transplant.

C. If immunosuppression therapy is used for other than organ or bone marrow transplantation, the agent must be FDA approved and it must be considered medically appropriate and acceptable treatment for the condition for which it is being used. (Medical review may be required in order to determine the appropriateness of its use.)

IV. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A. CHAMPVA may not cost share any service or care related to the administration of an experimental or investigational immunosuppressant drug that is not FDA approved. This includes immunosuppressant drugs which have limited approval by the FDA for use by certain transplant centers.

B. Benefits for immunosuppression therapy following a transplant that is not a CHAMPVA covered benefit may not be cost shared.

V. EXCEPTIONS

Although benefits for immunosuppression therapy are limited to covered transplantations only, benefits may be allowed even though an otherwise covered transplant may have been denied (for such reasons as being performed in a non-authorized transplant center, not preauthorized, etc.).

END OF POLICY