BlueCross BlueShield Federal Employee Program

INBRIJA
(levodopa inhalation powder)

RATIONALE FOR INCLUSION IN PA PROGRAM

Background

Inbrija consists of a dry powder formulation of levodopa for oral inhalation with the Inbrija inhaler. Levodopa, the metabolic precursor of dopamine, crosses the blood-brain barrier and presumably is converted to dopamine in the brain. This is thought to be the mechanism whereby levodopa relieves symptoms of Parkinson's disease (1).

Regulatory Status

FDA-approved indication: Inbrija is an aromatic amino acid indicated for the intermittent treatment of OFF episodes in patients with Parkinson's disease treated with carbidopa/levodopa (1).

Inbrija is contraindicated in patients currently taking a nonselective monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitor (e.g., phenelzine and tranylcypromine) or who have recently (within 2 weeks) taken a nonselective MAO inhibitor. Hypertension can occur if these drugs are used concurrently (1).

Patients treated with levodopa have reported falling asleep while engaged in activities of daily living, including the operation of motor vehicles. Before treatment with Inbrija is initiated, patients should be advised about the potential to develop drowsiness and that there is an increased risk for somnolence with the concomitant use of sedating medications and the presence of sleep disorders (1).

Patients with a major psychotic disorder should ordinarily not be treated with Inbrija due to the risk of exacerbating psychosis and causing hallucinations. In addition, medications that antagonize the effects of dopamine used to treat psychosis may exacerbate the symptoms of Parkinson's disease and may decrease the effectiveness of Inbrija (1).

The maximum dose per OFF period is 84 mg, and the maximum recommended daily dosage of Inbrija is 420 mg (1).

The safety and effectiveness of Inbrija in pediatric patients under 18 years of age have not been established (1).

Summary

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Inbrija consists of a dry powder formulation of levodopa for oral inhalation with the Inbrija inhaler. Levodopa, the metabolic precursor of dopamine, crosses the blood-brain barrier and presumably is converted to dopamine in the brain. This is thought to be the mechanism whereby levodopa relieves symptoms of Parkinson's disease. The safety and effectiveness of Inbrija in pediatric patients under 18 years of age have not been established (1).

Prior approval is required to ensure the safe, clinically appropriate, and cost-effective use of Inbrija while maintaining optimal therapeutic outcomes.

References

1. Inbrija [package Insert]. Ardsley, NY: Acorda Therapeutics, Inc.; December 2022.