BlueCross BlueShield
Federal Employee Program

JOURNAVX
(suzetrigine)

RATIONALE FOR INCLUSION IN PA PROGRAM

Background

Journavx (suzetrigine) is a selective blocker of $Na_v1.8$ voltage-gated sodium channel. $Na_v1.8$ is expressed in peripheral sensory neurons including dorsal root ganglion neurons, where its role is to transmit pain signals (action potentials). By selectively inhibiting $Na_v1.8$ channels, Journavx inhibits transmission of pain signals to the spinal cord and brain (1).

Regulatory Status

FDA-approved indications: Journavx is a sodium channel blocker indicated for the treatment of moderate to severe acute pain in adults (1).

Concomitant use with strong CYP3A inhibitors is contraindicated. Reduce the Journavx dose when used concomitantly with moderate CYP3A inhibitors. Avoid food and drinks containing grapefruit (1).

Journavx use has been associated with moderate and severe hepatic impairment. Avoid use in patients with severe hepatic impairment (Child-Pugh Class C). Use in patients with moderate hepatic impairment may increase the risk of adverse reactions and the dose of Journavx should be lowered (1).

Journavx-treated patients taking concomitant hormonal contraceptives containing progestins other than levonorgestrel and norethindrone should use additional nonhormonal contraceptives (such as condoms) or use alternative contraceptives during Journavx treatment and for 28 days after discontinuation of Journavx (1).

Journavx should be used for the shortest duration, consistent with individual patient treatment goals. Use of Journavx for the treatment of moderate to severe acute pain has not been studied beyond 14 days (1).

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

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Summary

Journavx is a sodium channel blocker indicated for the treatment of moderate to severe acute pain in adults. Concomitant use with strong CYP3A inhibitors is contraindicated. Use in patients with severe hepatic impairment (Child-Pugh Class C) should be avoided. The safety and effectiveness in pediatric patients under the age of 18 years of age have not been established (1).

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

References

1. Journavx [package insert]. Boston, MA: Vertex Pharmaceuticals Incorporated; January 2025.