BlueCross BlueShield
Federal Employee Program

RINVOQ/ RINVOQ LQ (upadacitinib)

RATIONALE FOR INCLUSION IN PA PROGRAM

Background

Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ (upadacitinib) is a Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor. JAKs are intracellular enzymes which transmit signals arising from cytokine or growth factor-receptor interactions on the cellular membrane to influence cellular processes of hematopoiesis and immune cell function. Within the signaling pathway, JAKs phosphorylate and activate Signal Transducers and Activators of Transcription (STATs) which modulate intracellular activity including gene expression. Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ modulates the signaling pathway at the point of JAKs, preventing the phosphorylation and activation of STATs (1).

Regulatory status

FDA-approved indications: Rinvoq is a Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor indicated for the treatment of: (1)

- Adults with moderately to severely active rheumatoid arthritis (RA) who have had an inadequate response or intolerance to one or more tumor necrosis factor (TNF) blockers.
    - Limitations of Use: Rinvoq is not recommended for use in combination with other JAK inhibitors, biologic immunomodulators, or with potent immunosuppressants such as azathioprine and cyclosporine.
- Adults and pediatric patients 12 years of age and older with refractory, moderate to severe atopic dermatitis whose disease is not adequately controlled with other systemic drug products, including biologics, or when use of those therapies are inadvisable.
    - Limitations of Use: Rinvoq is not recommended for use in combination with other JAK inhibitors, biologic immunomodulators, or with other immunosuppressants.
- Adults with moderately to severely active ulcerative colitis (UC) who have had an inadequate response or intolerance to one or more TNF blockers.
    - Limitations of Use: Rinvoq is not recommended for use in combination with other JAK inhibitors, biological therapies for ulcerative colitis, or with other potent immunosuppressants such as azathioprine and cyclosporine.
- Adults with moderately to severely active Crohn's disease (CD) who have had an inadequate response or intolerance to one or more TNF blockers.

  - Limitations of Use: Rinvoq is not recommended for use in combination with other JAK inhibitors, biological therapies for Crohn's disease, or with potent immunosuppressants such as azathioprine and cyclosporine.
- Adults with active ankylosing spondylitis (AS) who have had an inadequate response or intolerance to one or more TNF blockers.
  - Limitations of Use: Rinvoq is not recommended for use in combination with other JAK inhibitors, biologic DMARDs, or with potent immunosuppressants such as azathioprine and cyclosporine.
- Adults with active non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis (nr-axSpA) with objective signs of inflammation who have had an inadequate response or intolerance to TNF blocker therapy.
  - Limitations of Use: Rinvoq is not recommended for use in combination with other JAK inhibitors, biologic DMARDs, or with potent immunosuppressants such as azathioprine and cyclosporine.
- Adults with giant cell arteritis.
  - Limitations of Use: Rinvoq is not recommended for use in combination with other JAK inhibitors, biologic DMARDs, or with potent immunosuppressants such as azathioprine and cyclosporine.

Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ is indicated for the treatment of (1):

- Adults and pediatric patients 2 years of age and older with active psoriatic arthritis (PsA) who have had an inadequate response or intolerance to one or more TNF blockers.
  - Limitations of Use: Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ is not recommended for use in combination with other JAK inhibitors, biologic DMARDs, or with potent immunosuppressants such as azathioprine and cyclosporine.
- Patients 2 years of age and older with active polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis (pJIA) who have had an inadequate response or intolerance to one or more TNF blockers.
  - Limitations of Use: Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ is not recommended for use in combination with other JAK inhibitors, biologic DMARDs, or with potent immunosuppressants such as azathioprine and cyclosporine.

Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ carries several boxed warnings: (1)

1. Serious infections

a. Serious infections, including tuberculosis and bacterial, invasive fungal, viral, and other opportunistic infection leading to hospitalization or death. If a serious infection develops, interrupt Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ until the infection is controlled. Prior to starting Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ, perform a test for latent tuberculosis; if it is positive, start treatment for tuberculosis prior to starting Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ. Monitor all patients for active tuberculosis during treatment, even if the initial latent tuberculosis test is negative.

2. Mortality
    a. RA patients 50 years of age and older with at least one cardiovascular risk factor showed a higher rate of all-cause mortality, including sudden cardiovascular death, in patients treated with JAK inhibitors compared to TNF blockers.
3. Malignancies
    a. Lymphoma and other malignancies have been observed in patients treated with Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ.
    b. In RA patients treated with a JAK inhibitor, a higher rate of malignancies was observed when compared with TNF blockers.
4. Major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE)
    a. RA patients 50 years of age and older with at least one cardiovascular risk factor treated with a JAK inhibitor showed a higher rate of MACE (defined as cardiovascular death, myocardial infarction, and stroke) when compared to TNF blockers. Patients who are current or past smokers are at increased risk. Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ should be discontinued in patients that have experienced a myocardial infarction or stroke.
5. Thrombosis
    a. Thrombosis, including deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, and arterial thrombosis, have occurred in patients treated with JAK inhibitors used to treat inflammatory conditions. Many of these adverse events were serious and some resulted in death.
    b. In RA patients 50 years of age and older with at least one cardiovascular risk factor treated with a JAK inhibitor, a higher rate of thrombosis was observed when compared with TNF blockers.

BlueCross BlueShield Federal Employee Program

RINVOQ/ RINVOQ LQ (upadacitinib)

Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ can cause fetal harm when administered to a pregnant woman. Pregnancy status of patients of reproductive potential should be verified prior to treatment with Rinvoq/Rinqvoq LQ. Advise females of reproductive potential of the potential risk to the fetus and to use effective contraception during treatment with Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ and for 4 weeks following completion of therapy (1).

The safety and effectiveness of Rinvoq have not been established in pediatric patients less than 12 years of age with atopic dermatitis, less than 2 years of age with psoriatic arthritis or pJIA, or in patients less than 18 years of age for the other approved indications. The safety and effectiveness of Rinvoq LQ have not been established in pediatric patients less than 2 years of age with psoriatic arthritis or pJIA, or in patients less than 18 years of age for the other approved indications (1).

Summary

Rinvoq (upadacitinib) is a Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor indicated for patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA), ulcerative colitis (UC), Crohn's disease (CD), ankylosing spondylitis (AS), non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis (nr-axSpA), atopic dermatitis, and giant cell arteritis. Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ is indicated for patients with psoriatic arthritis (PsA) and polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis (pJIA). Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ has several boxed warnings including risk of serious infections, mortality, malignancies, MACE, and thrombosis. The safety and effectiveness of Rinvoq have not been established in pediatric patients less than 12 years of age with atopic dermatitis, less than 2 years of age with psoriatic arthritis or pJIA, or in patients less than 18 years of age for the other approved indications. The safety and effectiveness of Rinvoq LQ have not been established in pediatric patients less than 2 years of age with psoriatic arthritis or pJIA, or in patients less than 18 years of age for the other approved indications (1).

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

References

1. Rinvoq/Rinvoq LQ [package insert]. North Chicago, IL: AbbVie Inc.; April 2025.