RATIONALE FOR INCLUSION IN PA PROGRAM

Background

Xyrem (sodium oxybate) is a central nervous system depressant used for the treatment of cataplexy in narcolepsy or excessive daytime sleepiness. The mechanism of action of Xyrem in the treatment of narcolepsy is unknown. Sodium oxybate is the sodium salt of gamma-hydroxyburtyrate (GHB) an endogenous compound and metabolite of the neurotransmitter GABA. It is hypothesized that the therapeutic effects of Xyrem on cataplexy and excessive daytime sleepiness are mediated through $GABA_B$ actions at noradrenergic and dopaminergic neurons, as well as at thalamocortical neurons (1).

Regulatory Status

FDA-approved indications: Xyrem is a central nervous system depressant indicated for the treatment of cataplexy in narcolepsy or excessive daytime sleepiness (EDS) in patients 7 years of age and older with narcolepsy (1).

Xyrem includes a boxed warning citing the risks of central nervous system depression and abuse and misuse. Use caution when considering the concurrent use of Xyrem with other CNS depressants. Because of the risks of CNS depression, abuse and misuse Xyrem is available only through a restricted distribution program called the Xywav and Xyrem REMS (1).

Xyrem has warnings for depression and suicidality, confusion/anxiety, parasomnias and high sodium content in Xyrem. In addition, patients should be instructed to not engage in activities requiring mental alertness or motor coordination, including operating hazardous machinery, for at least 6 hours after taking Xyrem (1).

Xyrem is contraindicated in patients with succinic semialdehyde dehydrogenase deficiency and in combination with sedative hypnotics or alcohol (1).

Safety and effectiveness of Xyrem in patients less than 7 years of age have not been established (1).

Summary

BlueCross BlueShield Federal Employee Program

XYREM
(sodium oxybate)

Xyrem (sodium oxybate) is a central nervous system depressant used for the treatment of cataplexy in narcolepsy or excessive daytime sleepiness. Xyrem includes a boxed warning citing the risks of central nervous system depression and abuse and misuse. Xyrem has warnings for depression and suicidality, confusion/anxiety, parasomnias, and high sodium content in Xyrem. Xyrem is available only through a restricted distribution program called the Xywav and Xyrem REMS. Safety and effectiveness of Xyrem in patients less than 7 years of age have not been established (1).

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

References

1. Xyrem [package insert]. Palo Alto, CA: Jazz Pharmaceuticals Inc.; April 2023.