

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION POLICY

- POLICY:** Inflammatory Conditions – Cimzia Prior Authorization Policy
- Cimzia® (certolizumab pegol subcutaneous injection [lyophilized powder or solution] – UCB)

REVIEW DATE: 03/27/2024

OVERVIEW

Cimzia, a tumor necrosis factor inhibitor (TNFi), is indicated for the following uses:¹

- **Ankylosing spondylitis**, for the treatment of adults with active disease.
- **Crohn's disease**, for reducing signs and symptoms and maintaining clinical responses in adults with moderate to severe active disease who have had an inadequate response to conventional therapy.
- **Non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis**, in patients with objective signs of inflammation.
- **Plaque psoriasis**, for the treatment of adults with moderately to severely active disease who are candidates for systemic therapy or phototherapy.
- **Psoriatic arthritis**, for the treatment of adult patients with active disease.
- **Rheumatoid arthritis**, for the treatment of adults with moderately to severely active disease.

Cimzia may be used as monotherapy or in combination with conventional synthetic disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (csDMARDs).

Guidelines

TNFis feature prominently in guidelines for treatment of inflammatory conditions.

- **Axial Spondyloarthritis and Spondyloarthritis:** Guidelines for ankylosing spondylitis and non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis are published by the ACR/Spondylitis Association of America/Spondyloarthritis Research and Treatment Network (2019).² TNFis are recommended for the initial biologic. In those who are secondary nonresponders to a TNFi, a second TNFi is recommended over switching out of the class.
- **Crohn's Disease:** The American College of Gastroenterology has guidelines for Crohn's disease (2018).³ TNFis are listed as an option for disease that is resistant to corticosteroids, severely active disease, perianal fistulizing disease, and maintenance of remission. In post-operative Crohn's disease, a TNFi should be started within 4 weeks of surgery to prevent recurrence. Guidelines from the American Gastroenterological Association (2021) include TNFis among the therapies for moderate to severe Crohn's disease, for induction and maintenance of remission.⁷
- **Plaque Psoriasis:** Guidelines from the American Academy of Dermatologists and National Psoriasis Foundation (2019) recommend TNFis as a monotherapy treatment option for adults with moderate to severe disease.⁴ Based on extrapolation of data, Cimzia is likely to have class characteristics similar to the other TNFis.
- **Psoriatic Arthritis:** Guidelines from ACR (2018) generally recommend treatment with a TNFi over other therapies as initial treatment for patients who are treatment-naïve.⁵
- **Rheumatoid Arthritis:** Guidelines from ACR (2021) recommend addition of a biologic or a targeted synthetic disease modifying anti-rheumatic drug (DMARD) for a patient taking the maximum tolerated dose of methotrexate who is not at target.⁶

POLICY STATEMENT

03/27/2024

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Prior Authorization is recommended for prescription benefit coverage of Cimzia. All approvals are provided for the duration noted below. In cases where the approval is authorized in months, 1 month is equal to 30 days. Because of the specialized skills required for evaluation and diagnosis of patients treated with Cimzia as well as the monitoring required for adverse events and long-term efficacy, initial approval requires Cimzia to be prescribed by or in consultation with a physician who specializes in the condition being treated.

Automation: None.

RECOMMENDED AUTHORIZATION CRITERIA

Coverage of Cimzia is recommended in those who meet one of the following criteria:

FDA-Approved Indications

1. Ankylosing Spondylitis. Approve for the duration noted if the patient meets ONE of the following (A or B):

A) Initial Therapy. Approve for 6 months if prescribed by or in consultation with a rheumatologist.

B) Patient is Currently Receiving Cimzia. Approve for 1 year if the patient meets BOTH of the following (i and ii):

i. Patient has been established on therapy for at least 6 months; AND

Note: A patient who has received < 6 months of therapy or who is restarting therapy is reviewed under criterion A (Initial Therapy).

ii. Patient meets at least ONE of the following (a or b):

a) When assessed by at least one objective measure, patient experienced a beneficial clinical response from baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug); OR

Note: Examples of objective measures include Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Score (ASDAS), Ankylosing Spondylitis Quality of Life Scale (ASQoL), Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Index (BASDAI), Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Functional Index (BASFI), Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Global Score (BAS-G), Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Metrology Index (BASMI), Dougados Functional Index (DFI), Health Assessment Questionnaire for the Spondylarthropathies (HAQ-S), and/or serum markers (e.g., C-reactive protein, erythrocyte sedimentation rate).

b) Compared with baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug), patient experienced an improvement in at least one symptom, such as decreased pain or stiffness, or improvement in function or activities of daily living.

2. Crohn's Disease. Approve for the duration noted if the patient meets ONE of the following (A or B):

A) Initial Therapy. Approve for 6 months if the patient meets ALL of the following (i, ii, and iii):

i. Patient is \geq 18 years of age; AND

ii. Patient meets ONE of the following (a, b, c, or d):

a) Patient has tried or is currently taking corticosteroids, or corticosteroids are contraindicated in this patient; OR

b) Patient has tried one other conventional systemic therapy for Crohn's disease; OR

Note: Examples of systemic therapies for Crohn's disease include azathioprine, 6-mercaptopurine, and methotrexate. An exception to the requirement for a trial of or contraindication to steroids or a trial of one other conventional systemic agent can be made if the patient has already tried at least one biologic other than the requested drug. A biosimilar of the requested biologic does not count. Refer to [Appendix](#) for examples of biologics used for Crohn's disease. A trial of mesalamine does not count as a systemic agent for Crohn's disease.

- c) Patient has enterocutaneous (perianal or abdominal) or rectovaginal fistulas; OR
 - d) Patient had ileocolonic resection (to reduce the chance of Crohn's disease recurrence);
AND
 - iii. The medication is prescribed by or in consultation with a gastroenterologist.
- B) Patient is Currently Receiving Cimzia.** Approve for 1 year if the patient meets BOTH of the following (i and ii):
- i. Patient has been established on therapy for at least 6 months; AND
Note: A patient who has received < 6 months of therapy or who is restarting therapy is reviewed under criterion A (Initial Therapy).
 - ii. Patient meets at least ONE of the following (a or b):
 - a) When assessed by at least one objective measure, patient experienced a beneficial clinical response from baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug); OR
Note: Examples of objective measures include fecal markers (e.g., fecal lactoferrin, fecal calprotectin), serum markers (e.g., C-reactive protein), imaging studies (magnetic resonance enterography [MRE], computed tomography enterography [CTE]), endoscopic assessment, and/or reduced dose of corticosteroids.
 - b) Compared with baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug), patient experienced an improvement in at least one symptom, such as decreased pain, fatigue, stool frequency, and/or blood in stool.
- 3. Non-Radiographic Axial Spondyloarthritis.** Approve for the duration noted if the patient meets ONE of the following (A or B):
- A) Initial Therapy.** Approve for 6 months if the patient meets BOTH of the following (i and ii):
- i. Patient has objective signs of inflammation, defined as at least ONE of the following (a or b):
 - a) C-reactive protein (CRP) elevated beyond the upper limit of normal for the reporting laboratory; OR
 - b) Sacroiliitis reported on magnetic resonance imaging (MRI); AND
 - ii. The medication is prescribed by or in consultation with a rheumatologist.
- B) Patient is Currently Receiving Cimzia.** Approve for 1 year if the patient meets BOTH of the following (i and ii):
- i. Patient has been established on the requested drug for at least 6 months; AND
Note: A patient who has received < 6 months of therapy or who is restarting therapy with the requested drug is reviewed under criterion A (Initial Therapy).
 - ii. Patient meets at least ONE of the following (a or b):
 - a) When assessed by at least one objective measure, patient experienced a beneficial clinical response from baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug); OR
Note: Examples of objective measures include Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Score (ASDAS), Ankylosing Spondylitis Quality of Life Scale (ASQoL), Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Index (BASDAI), Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Functional Index (BASFI), Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Global Score (BAS-G), Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Metrology Index (BASMI), Dougados Functional Index (DFI), Health Assessment Questionnaire for the Spondylarthropathies (HAQ-S), and/or serum markers (e.g., C-reactive protein, erythrocyte sedimentation rate).
 - b) Compared with baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug), patient experienced an improvement in at least one symptom, such as decreased pain or stiffness, or improvement in function or activities of daily living.
- 4. Plaque Psoriasis.** Approve for the duration noted if the patient meets ONE of the following (A or B):
- A) Initial Therapy.** Approve for 3 months if the patient meets ALL of the following (i, ii, and iii):
- i. Patient is \geq 18 years of age; AND
 - ii. Patient meets ONE of the following conditions (a or b):

- a) Patient has tried at least one traditional systemic agent for psoriasis for at least 3 months, unless intolerant; OR
Note: Examples of traditional systemic agents for psoriasis include methotrexate, cyclosporine, acitretin tablets, or psoralen plus ultraviolet A light (PUVA). An exception to the requirement for a trial of one traditional systemic agent for psoriasis can be made if the patient has already had a 3-month trial or previous intolerance to at least one biologic other than the requested drug. A biosimilar of the requested biologic does not count. Refer to [Appendix](#) for examples of biologics used for psoriasis. A patient who has already tried a biologic for psoriasis is not required to “step back” and try a traditional systemic agent for psoriasis.
 - b) Patient has a contraindication to methotrexate, as determined by the prescriber; AND
 - iii. The medication is prescribed by or in consultation with a dermatologist.
 - B) Patient is Currently Receiving Cimzia. Approve for 1 year if the patient meets ALL of the following (i, ii, and iii):
 - i. Patient has been established on the requested drug for at least 3 months; AND
Note: A patient who has received < 3 months of therapy or who is restarting therapy with the requested drug is reviewed under criterion A (Initial Therapy).
 - ii. Patient experienced a beneficial clinical response, defined as improvement from baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug) in at least one of the following: estimated body surface area affected by psoriasis, erythema, induration/thickness, and/or scale of areas affected by psoriasis; AND
 - iii. Compared with baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug), patient experienced an improvement in at least one symptom, such as decreased pain, itching, and/or burning.
5. **Psoriatic Arthritis.** Approve for the duration noted if the patient meets ONE of the following (A or B):
- A) Initial Therapy. Approve for 6 months if prescribed by or in consultation with a rheumatologist or a dermatologist.
 - B) Patient is Currently Receiving Cimzia. Approve for 1 year if the patient meets BOTH of the following (i and ii):
 - i. Patient has been established on the requested drug for at least 6 months; AND
Note: A patient who has received < 6 months of therapy or who is restarting therapy with the requested drug is reviewed under criterion A (Initial Therapy).
 - ii. Patient meets at least ONE of the following (a or b):
 - a) When assessed by at least one objective measure, patient experienced a beneficial clinical response from baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug); OR
Note: Examples of standardized measures of disease activity include Disease Activity Index for Psoriatic Arthritis (DAPSA), Composite Psoriatic Disease Activity Index (CPDAI), Psoriatic Arthritis Disease Activity Score (PsA DAS), Grace Index, Leeds Enthesitis Score (LEI), Spondyloarthritis Consortium of Canada (SPARCC) enthesitis score, Leeds Dactylitis Instrument Score, Minimal Disease Activity (MDA), Psoriatic Arthritis Impact of Disease (PsAID-12), and/or serum markers (e.g., C-reactive protein, erythrocyte sedimentation rate).
 - b) Compared with baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug), patient experienced an improvement in at least one symptom, such as less joint pain, morning stiffness, or fatigue; improved function or activities of daily living; decreased soft tissue swelling in joints or tendon sheaths.
6. **Rheumatoid Arthritis.** Approve for the duration noted if the patient meets ONE of the following (A or B):
- A) Initial Therapy. Approve for 6 months if the patient meets BOTH of the following (i and ii):

- i. Patient has tried ONE conventional synthetic disease-modifying antirheumatic drug (DMARD) for at least 3 months; AND
Note: Examples of conventional synthetic DMARDs include methotrexate (oral or injectable), leflunomide, hydroxychloroquine, and sulfasalazine. An exception to the requirement for a trial of one conventional synthetic DMARD can be made if the patient has already had a 3-month trial of at least one biologic other than the requested drug. A biosimilar of the requested biologic does not count. Refer to [Appendix](#) for examples of biologics used for rheumatoid arthritis. A patient who has already tried a biologic for rheumatoid arthritis is not required to “step back” and try a conventional synthetic DMARD.
 - ii. The medication is prescribed by or in consultation with a rheumatologist.
- B) Patient is Currently Receiving Cimzia.** Approve for 1 year if the patient meets BOTH of the following (i and ii):
- i. Patient has been established on the requested drug for at least 6 months; AND
Note: A patient who has received < 6 months of therapy or who is restarting therapy with the requested drug is reviewed under criterion A (Initial Therapy).
 - ii. Patient meets at least ONE of the following (a or b):
 - a) Patient experienced a beneficial clinical response when assessed by at least one objective measure; OR
Note: Examples of standardized and validated measures of disease activity include Clinical Disease Activity Index (CDAI), Disease Activity Score (DAS) 28 using erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) or C-reactive protein (CRP), Patient Activity Scale (PAS)-II, Rapid Assessment of Patient Index Data 3 (RAPID-3), and/or Simplified Disease Activity Index (SDAI).
 - b) Patient experienced an improvement in at least one symptom, such as decreased joint pain, morning stiffness, or fatigue; improved function or activities of daily living; decreased soft tissue swelling in joints or tendon sheaths.

Other Uses with Supportive Evidence

- 7. Spondyloarthritis, Other Subtypes.** Approve for the duration noted if the patient meets ONE of the following conditions (A or B):
- Note: Examples of other subtypes of spondyloarthritis include undifferentiated arthritis and reactive arthritis (Reiter’s disease). For ankylosing spondylitis, psoriatic arthritis, or non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis, refer to the respective criteria under FDA-approved indications.
- A) Initial Therapy.** Approve for 6 months if the patient meets ALL of the following (i, ii, and iii):
- i. Patient has arthritis primarily in the knees, ankles, elbows, wrists, hands, and/or feet; AND
 - ii. Patient has tried at least ONE conventional synthetic disease-modifying antirheumatic drug (DMARD); AND
Note: Examples include methotrexate, leflunomide, and sulfasalazine.
 - iii. The medication is prescribed by or in consultation with a rheumatologist.
- B) Patient is Currently Receiving Cimzia.** Approve for 1 year if the patient meets BOTH of the following (i and ii):
- i. Patient has been established on the requested drug for at least 6 months; AND
Note: A patient who has received < 6 months of therapy or who is restarting therapy with the requested drug is reviewed under criterion A (Initial Therapy).
 - ii. Patients meets at least ONE of the following (a or b):
 - a) When assessed by at least one objective measure, patient experienced a beneficial clinical response from baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug); OR
Note: Examples of objective measures include Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Score (ASDAS) and/or serum markers (e.g., C-reactive protein, erythrocyte sedimentation rate).

- b) Compared with baseline (prior to initiating the requested drug), patient experienced an improvement in at least one symptom, such as decreased pain or stiffness, or improvement in function or activities of daily living.

CONDITIONS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

Coverage of Cimzia is not recommended in the following situations:

1. **Concurrent Use with a Biologic or with a Targeted Synthetic Disease-Modifying Antirheumatic Drug (DMARD).** Cimzia should not be administered in combination with another biologic or with a targeted synthetic DMARD used for an inflammatory condition (see [Appendix](#) for examples). Combination therapy is generally not recommended due to a potentially higher rate of AEs with combinations and lack of data supportive of additional efficacy.
Note: This does NOT exclude the use of conventional synthetic DMARDs (e.g., methotrexate, leflunomide, hydroxychloroquine, and sulfasalazine) in combination with Cimzia.
2. Coverage is not recommended for circumstances not listed in the Recommended Authorization Criteria. Criteria will be updated as new published data are available.

REFERENCES

1. Cimzia[®] subcutaneous injection [prescribing information]. Smyrna, GA: UCB; December 2022.
2. Ward MM, Deodhar A, Gensler LS, et al. 2019 update of the American College of Rheumatology/Spondylitis Association of America/Spondyloarthritis Research and Treatment Network recommendations for the treatment of ankylosing spondylitis and nonradiographic axial spondyloarthritis. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2019;71(10):1599-1613.
3. Lichtenstein GR, Loftus EV, Isaacs KL, et al. ACG Clinical Guideline: management of Crohn's Disease in adults. *Am J Gastroenterol.* 2018;113(4):481-517.
4. Menter A, Strober BE, Kaplan DH, et al. Joint AAD-NPF guidelines of care for the management and treatment of psoriasis with biologics. *J Am Acad Dermatol.* 2019;80(4):1029-1072.
5. Singh JA, Guyatt G, Ogdie A, et al. 2018 American College of Rheumatology/National Psoriasis Foundation Guideline for the treatment of psoriatic arthritis. *Arthritis Care Res (Hoboken).* 2019;71(1):2-29.
6. Fraenkel L, Bathon JM, England BR, et al. 2021 American College of Rheumatology guideline for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2021;73(7):1108-1123.
7. Feuerstein JD, Ho EY, Shmidt E, et al. AGA clinical practice guidelines on the medical management of moderate to severe luminal and perianal fistulizing Crohn's disease. *Gastroenterology.* 2021;160(7):2496-2508.

APPENDIX

* Not an all-inclusive list of indications (e.g., oncology indications and rare inflammatory conditions are not listed). Refer to the prescribing information for the respective agent for FDA-approved indications; SC – Subcutaneous; TNF – Tumor necrosis factor; AS – Ankylosing spondylitis; CD – Crohn’s disease; JIA – Juvenile idiopathic arthritis; PsO – Plaque psoriasis; PsA – Psoriatic arthritis; RA – Rheumatoid arthritis; UC – Ulcerative colitis; nr-axSpA – Non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis; IV – Intravenous, PJIA – Polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis; IL – Interleukin; SJIA – Systemic juvenile idiopathic arthritis; PMR – Polymyalgia rheumatic; ^ Off-label use of Kineret in JIA supported in guidelines; ERA – Enthesitis-related arthritis; DMARD – Disease-modifying antirheumatic drug; PDE4 – Phosphodiesterase 4; JAK – Janus kinase; AD – Atopic dermatitis; TYK2 – Tyrosine kinase 2.