

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont and The Vermont Health Plan Prior Authorization Guidelines Meridia® (sibutramine)

DESCRIPTION: Meridia® is a non-amphetamine appetite suppressant used for the treatment of obesity. Meridia® blocks the reuptake of serotonin and norepinephrine at neuronal synapses.

INDICATION(S): Meridia® is indicated for the management of obesity in conjunction with a reduced calorie diet.

REASONS FOR PA: Cost Potential for misuse Toxicity

CRITERIA for APPROVAL:

1. Patient remains overweight despite weight reduction program including dietary modification and increased physical activity.
AND
2. Patient is enrolled in nutritional counseling.
AND
3. Patient is 16 years of age or older.
AND
4. Patient's initial body mass index (BMI) is $\geq 30 \text{ kg/m}^2$.
OR
5. Patient's initial body mass index (BMI) is $\geq 27 \text{ kg/m}^2$ and patient has other cardiovascular risk factors.

Note: BMI = $\frac{\text{Weight (lb)} \times 705}{\text{Height (in)}^2}$ or $\frac{\text{Weight (kg)}}{\text{Height (m)}^2}$

REASONS for DENIAL of BENEFIT:

1. Patient has a hypersensitivity to Meridia® or any of its components.
2. Patient has a history of coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure, arrhythmias or stroke.
3. Patient has uncontrolled hypertension.
4. Patient is receiving a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI).
5. Patient has a major eating disorder (anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa).
6. Patient is taking an amphetamine product or another centrally-acting weight loss agent.
7. Patient does not meet above criteria.

RENEWAL CRITERIA: Review of first 3 months demonstrates weight loss (first renewal) or review of previous 6 months of therapy demonstrates additional weight loss or maintenance of lost weight (subsequent renewals).

BENEFIT APPROVAL: Initial approval for a period of 3 months with a quantity limit of 30 capsules/30 days. Renewal approval period: 6 months. Lifetime maximum of two years.

References:

1. Meridia® (sibutramine) Prescribing Information. Abbott Laboratories, Chicago IL. December 2004.