


MEDICAL POLICY	Ultra-Rapid Detoxification
Effective Date: 11/1/2021  <div style="text-align: right;">11/1/2021</div>	Medical Policy Number: 258
	Medical Policy Committee Approved Date: 9/2020; 10/2021
Medical Officer	Date

See Policy CPT/HCPCS CODE section below for any prior authorization requirements

SCOPE:

Providence Health Plan, Providence Health Assurance, Providence Plan Partners, and Ayn Health Solutions as applicable (referred to individually as “Company” and collectively as “Companies”).

APPLIES TO:

All lines of business

BENEFIT APPLICATION

Medicaid Members

Oregon: Services requested for Oregon Health Plan (OHP) members follow the OHP Prioritized List and Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) as the primary resource for coverage determinations. Medical policy criteria below may be applied when there are no criteria available in the OARs and the OHP Prioritized List.

POLICY CRITERIA

Note: This policy does not apply to detoxification or emergency detoxification, which may be considered medically necessary.

Ultra-rapid detoxification is considered **not medically necessary and not covered** for the treatment of any indication, including but not limited to, withdrawal from opioid dependence.

Link to [Policy Summary](#)

CPT/HCPCS CODES

All Lines of Business

Unlisted Codes

All unlisted codes will be reviewed for medical necessity, correct coding, and pricing at the claim level. If an unlisted code is billed related to services addressed in this policy then it will be **denied as not covered**.

90899	Unlisted psychiatric service or procedure
-------	---

DESCRIPTION

Ultra-Rapid Detoxification

Ultra-rapid detoxification (UROD) refers to the use of general anesthesia alongside high doses of an opiate antagonist (naloxone). The procedure is performed in an intensive care unit and the patient requires 1 to 2 days of hospitalization. The procedure hypothetically accelerates detoxification and eliminates dependency, while shielding the patient from withdrawal symptoms.

Opioid Withdrawal

Opioid withdrawal refers to a host of symptoms that may occur when an opioid-dependent individual stops using opioids. These may include drug craving, anxiety, restlessness, gastrointestinal distress, diaphoresis, and tachycardia.¹

Detoxification

Medically-supervised opioid withdrawal, also known as detoxification, involves the administration of medication to reduce the severity of withdrawal symptoms.¹ Medications used in the treatment of withdrawal symptoms may include opioid agonists such as methadone and buprenorphine (a partial agonist), as well as alpha-2 adrenergic agonists such as clonidine and lofexidine.¹

REVIEW OF EVIDENCE

Systematic Reviews

In 2010, Gowing and colleagues conducted a systematic review addressing the safety and efficacy of opioid antagonists under heavy sedation or anesthesia (i.e. ultra-rapid detoxification for the treatment of opioid withdrawal).² Independent investigators systematically searched the literature through August 2009, identified eligible studies, assessed study quality and extracted data. In total, 9 studies (8 RCTs) reporting data from 1,109 participants were included for review. Primary outcomes of interest include intensity of withdrawal, duration of treatment, nature and incidence of adverse events and completion of withdrawal treatment. Authors found that antagonist-induced withdrawal was more intense but less prolonged than withdrawal managed with reducing doses of methadone, and that doses of naltrexone sufficient for blockade of opioid effects can be established significantly more quickly with antagonist-

induced withdrawal than withdrawal managed with clonidine and symptomatic medications. Nonetheless, data indicated a significantly greater risk of adverse events with heavy, compared to light, sedation (RR 3.21, 95% CI 1.13 to 9.12, $p = 0.03$). Investigators concluded that antagonist-induced withdrawal under heavy sedation or anaesthesia is not supported and does not confer additional benefits in terms of less severe withdrawal or increased rates of commencement on maintenance treatment.

Nonrandomized Studies

In addition to studies included in the systematic review above,² several recent clinical trials assessed the safety and efficacy of ultra-rapid detoxification.³⁻⁶ Results from large samples ($n = 64-424$) reported mixed results at short-term follow-up, and high relapse rates among patients receiving UROD alone at short- and intermediate-follow-up, potentially due to a lack of accompanying maintenance therapy and social support.^{1,4}

CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

In 2016, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended against ultra-rapid detoxification in its for prescribing opioids for chronic pain.⁷ Authors stated that “ultrarapid detoxification under anesthesia is associated with substantial risks, including death, and should not be used.”⁷

Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH)

In 2016, the CADTH published a guideline recommended against the use of UROD, due to high risk for adverse events and limited evidence of efficacy.⁸

American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)

In 2015, the ASAM published a national practice guideline for the use of medications in the treatment of addiction involving opioid use.⁹ Authors recommended against the use of UROD in the treatment of opioid withdrawal.

World Federation of Societies of Biological Psychiatry (WFSBP)

In 2011, the WFSBP published guidelines addressing the biological treatment of opioid dependence.¹⁰ Authors recommended against UROD citing safety and efficacy concerns.

National Institutes for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

In 2007, the NICE published a clinical practice guideline addressing drug misuse and opioid detoxification in adults.¹¹ Authors recommended against UROD citing the risk of serious adverse events, including death.

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID

As of 9/9/2021, no Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) coverage guidance was identified which addresses ultra-rapid detoxification for the treatment of withdrawal from opioid dependence. The CMS National Coverage Determination (NCD) for Treatment of Drug Abuse (Chemical Dependency) ([130.6](#))¹² does not address ultra-rapid detoxification; therefore, this policy applies to all lines of business.

POLICY SUMMARY

Evidence is insufficient to support the efficacy of ultra-rapid detoxification (UROD) for the treatment of opioid dependence withdrawal. There is a lack of well-designed controlled trials, and studies to date have reported high relapse rates among patients undergoing UROD relative to other treatments. Moreover, all clinical practice organizations that address UROD recommend against its use due to the treatment's elevated risk of adverse events, including death.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

Company Medical Policies serve as guidance for the administration of plan benefits. Medical policies do not constitute medical advice nor a guarantee of coverage. Company Medical Policies are reviewed annually and are based upon published, peer-reviewed scientific evidence and evidence-based clinical practice guidelines that are available as of the last policy update. The Companies reserve the right to determine the application of Medical Policies and make revisions to Medical Policies at any time. Providers will be given at least 60-days notice of policy changes that are restrictive in nature.

The scope and availability of all plan benefits are determined in accordance with the applicable coverage agreement. Any conflict or variance between the terms of the coverage agreement and Company Medical Policy will be resolved in favor of the coverage agreement.

REGULATORY STATUS

Mental Health Parity Statement

Coverage decisions are made on the basis of individualized determinations of medical necessity and the experimental or investigational character of the treatment in the individual case. In cases where medical necessity is not established by policy for specific treatment modalities, evidence not previously considered regarding the efficacy of the modality that is presented shall be given consideration to determine if the policy represents current standards of care.

REFERENCES

1. UpToDate. Medically supervised opioid withdrawal during treatment for addiction. Updated August 18 2020. <https://www.uptodate.com/contents/medically-supervised-opioid-withdrawal-during-treatment-for-addiction>. Accessed 9/9/2021.
2. Gowing L, Ali R, White JM. Opioid antagonists under heavy sedation or anaesthesia for opioid withdrawal. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*. 2010(1).

3. Qiu Y-w, Jiang G-h, Su H-h, et al. Short-term UROD treatment on cerebral function in codeine-containing cough syrups dependent male individuals. *European radiology*. 2016;26(9):2964-2973.
4. Salimi A, Safari F, Mohajerani SA, Hashemian M, Kolahi A-A, Mottaghi K. Long-term relapse of ultra-rapid opioid detoxification. *Journal of addictive diseases*. 2014;33(1):33-40.
5. Forozeshfard M, Zoroufchi BH, Zafarghandi MBS, Bandari R, Foroutan B. Six-month follow-up study of ultrarapid opiate detoxification with naltrexone. *International journal of high risk behaviors & addiction*. 2014;3(4).
6. Safari F, Mottaghi K, Malek S, Salimi A. Effect of ultra-rapid opiate detoxification on withdrawal syndrome. *Journal of addictive diseases*. 2010;29(4):449-454.
7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain - United States, 2016. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/rr/pdfs/rr6501e1.pdf>. Published 2016. Accessed 9/9/2021.
8. Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health. Rapid and Ultra-Rapid Detoxification in Adults with Opioid Addiction: A Review of Clinical and Cost-Effectiveness, Safety, and Guidelines. Jan 15, 2016. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK343899/pdf/Bookshelf_NBK343899.pdf. Accessed 9/9/2021.
9. American Society of Addiction Medicine The National Practice Guideline - For the Use of Medications in the Treatment of Addiction Involving Opioid Use. June 1 2015. <https://www.asam.org/docs/default-source/practice-support/guidelines-and-consensus-docs/asam-national-practice-guideline-supplement.pdf?sfvrsn=24>. Accessed 9/9/2021.
10. Soyka M, Kranzler HR, van den Brink W, et al. The World Federation of Societies of Biological Psychiatry (WFSBP) guidelines for the biological treatment of substance use and related disorders. Part 2: Opioid dependence. *The world journal of biological psychiatry*. 2011;12(3):160-187.
11. National Institutes for Health and Care Excellence. Drug misuse in over 16s: opioid detoxification. July 25 2007. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg52/chapter/1-Guidance>. Accessed 9/9/2021.
12. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. National Coverage Determination (NCD) for Treatment of Drug Abuse (Chemical Dependency) (130.6). Effective 1/1/1966. <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/details/ncd-details.aspx?NCDId=28>. Accessed 9/9/2021.