BlueCross BlueShield
Federal Employee Program
Federal Employee Program®
1310 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
202.942.1000
Fax 202.942.1125

5.70.028

Section:	Prescription Drugs	**Effective Date:**	July 1, 2023
Subsection:	Analgesics and Anesthetics	**Original Policy Date:**	July 3, 2013
Subject:	Ketamine Powder	**Page:**	1 of 4

Last Review Date: June 15, 2023

Ketamine Powder

Description

Ketamine Powder

Background
Ketamine is a rapid-acting anesthetic that can produce anesthesia while maintaining skeletal muscle tone, laryngeal-pharyngeal reflexes, and cardiovascular and respiratory stimulation (1).

Regulatory Status
FDA-approved indication: Ketamine is used as an adjunct in general anesthesia as well as a sedative in minor surgical or diagnostic procedures that do not require skeletal muscle relaxation (1).

There are several off-label uses that have been studied for ketamine including, but not limited to, chronic pain, including chronic neuropathic pain, restless legs syndrome and phantom limb syndrome. Alternative routes of administration, including oral, intranasal, transdermal, rectal and subcutaneous have been studied. However, these routes of administration and uses are investigational and are not supported by the FDA (2).

Common adverse effects of ketamine include hypertension, tachycardia and psychiatric signs and symptoms. Ketamine can also produce a transient respiratory depression therefore its use requires regular monitoring of vital signs (1).

Ketamine injection is commercially available in 10 mg/ml, 50 mg/ml and 100 mg/ml vials (1-2).

Related policies

Anti-inflammatory Pain Powders, Baclofen Powder, Cyclobenzaprine Powder, Gabapentin Powder, Ketalar, Lidocaine Injection, Lidocaine Powder, Lidocaine Topical, Lidoderm Patch, Topical Anti-inflammatory Agents

Policy

This policy statement applies to clinical review performed for pre-service (Prior Approval, Precertification, Advanced Benefit Determination, etc.) and/or post-service claims.

Ketamine powder may be considered **medically necessary** if the conditions indicated below are met.

Ketamine powder may be considered **investigational** for all other indications.

Prior-Approval Requirements

Age 16 years of age or older

Diagnoses

Patient must have **ONE** of the following:

1. Induction of anesthesia prior to the administration of other general anesthetic agents
2. Conscious sedation prior to minor surgical or diagnostic procedures

AND ALL of the following:

a. The requested dosage form is for injection
b. The requested dose does not exceed the FDA approved limit of 100 mg/ml
c. The requested dose is not commercially available

Prior – Approval *Renewal* Requirements

Same as above

Policy Guidelines

Pre - PA Allowance

None

Prior - Approval Limits

Duration 12 months

Prior – Approval *Renewal* Limits

Same as above

Rationale

Summary

Ketamine powder is a rapid-acting anesthetic that can produce anesthesia while maintaining skeletal muscle tone, laryngeal-pharyngeal reflexes, and cardiovascular and respiratory stimulation. Ketamine is used in patients 16 years of age or older for the induction of anesthesia or for conscious sedation for minor surgical procedures (1).

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

References

1. Ketamine hydrochloride injection [package insert]. Lake Forest, IL: Hospira, Inc.; March 2021.
2. Kronenberg RH. Ketamine as an analgesic: parenteral, oral, rectal, subcutaneous, transdermal and intranasal administration. J Pain Palliat Care Pharmacother. 200216(3):27-35.

Policy History

Date	Action
July 2013	New policy
September 2013	Annual editorial review by the PMPC
June 2014	Annual editorial review and reference update
June 2015	Annual review
March 2016	Annual editorial review and reference update, Policy code changed from 5.02.28 to 5.70.28
March 2017	Annual editorial review and reference update
March 2018	Annual editorial review
March 2019	Annual review and reference update
March 2020	Annual review
June 2021	Annual review and reference update
June 2022	Annual review
June 2023	Annual review. Changed policy number to 5.70.028

Keywords

This policy was approved the FEP® Pharmacy and Medical Policy Committee on June 15, 2023 and is effective on July 1, 2023.