The burning truth about proton pump inhibitors

Uncomplicated gastroesophageal reflux disease, or GERD, should be managed with a systematic approach to avoid possible side effects and complications of long-term proton pump inhibitor use.1,2

1. Lifestyle changes, such as smoking cessation, weight loss and avoiding trigger foods known to cause uncomplicated GERD, should be advocated for all patients.

2. For mild, intermittent symptoms use an antacid or H2-receptor antagonist.

3. For severe symptoms, use a short treatment course with a proton pump inhibitor.
   • Generics are available over-the-counter.
   • Step the therapy down to the lowest effective dose.
   • PPI therapy is best when taken 30 minutes before breakfast.

It’s important to minimize your risk. Long term use of a PPI at high doses can lead to:

• Increased susceptibility to infection due to the low-acidity environment optimal for survival and growth of intestinal bacteria3

• Increased risk of fractures, especially in patients with osteoporosis or other risk factors4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proton Pump Inhibitors</th>
<th>Formulary Status</th>
<th>Step Therapy</th>
<th>Typical Copayment5</th>
<th>Monthly Cost6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omeprazole Tablets/Capsules</td>
<td>Preferred (Tier 1)</td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$10-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prilosec, Prilosec OTC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pantoprazole Tablets (Protonix)</td>
<td>Preferred (Tier 1)</td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lansoprazole (Prevacid Rx, Prevacid Solutab)</td>
<td>Required for BCN only</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$90-120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aciphex, Dexilant, Nexium, Vimovo, Zegerid Rx Packet</td>
<td>Nonformulary (Tier 3)</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$160-280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coverage may not apply to Medicare Part D plans. Nonformulary drugs may not be covered depending on the member’s drug rider.


5. Based on the most common triple-tier plan design.

6. Based on discounted AWP or MAC for a 30-day supply.