

# Drug and Biologic Coverage Policy



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## Guselkumab

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### Related Coverage Resources

#### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE**

The following Coverage Policy applies to health benefit plans administered by Cigna Companies. Certain Cigna Companies and/or lines of business only provide utilization review services to clients and do not make coverage determinations. References to standard benefit plan language and coverage determinations do not apply to those clients. Coverage Policies are intended to provide guidance in interpreting certain standard benefit plans administered by Cigna Companies. Please note, the terms of a customer's particular benefit plan document [Group Service Agreement, Evidence of Coverage, Certificate of Coverage, Summary Plan Description (SPD) or similar plan document] may differ significantly from the standard benefit plans upon which these Coverage Policies are based. For example, a customer's benefit plan document may contain a specific exclusion related to a topic addressed in a Coverage Policy. In the event of a conflict, a customer's benefit plan document always supersedes the information in the Coverage Policies. In the absence of a controlling federal or state coverage mandate, benefits are ultimately determined by the terms of the applicable benefit plan document. Coverage determinations in each specific instance require consideration of 1) the terms of the applicable benefit plan document in effect on the date of service; 2) any applicable laws/regulations; 3) any relevant collateral source materials including Coverage Policies and; 4) the specific facts of the particular situation. Coverage Policies relate exclusively to the administration of health benefit plans. Coverage Policies are not recommendations for treatment and should never be used as treatment guidelines. In certain markets, delegated vendor guidelines may be used to support medical necessity and other coverage determinations.

### Overview

This policy supports medical necessity review guselkumab (Tremfya®).

Receipt of sample product does not satisfy any criteria requirements for coverage.

### Medical Necessity Criteria

**Guselkumab (Tremfya) is considered medically necessary when ONE of the following is met:**

1. **Plaque Psoriasis.** Individual meets **ALL** of the following criteria:
  - A. 18 years of age or older
  - B. Body Surface Area (BSA) of greater than 5%, **OR** BSA less than 5% and there is and there is involvement of the scalp, face, the palms and soles (i.e., palmoplantar disease), or genitals
  - C. Documentation of **ONE** of the following:
    - i. Failure to **ONE** of the following, unless contraindicated or intolerant to **ALL** of the following:

- a. Topical therapy (for example, topical corticosteroids, topical vitamin D analogs, Tazorac)
  - b. Systemic therapy (for example, methotrexate, cyclosporine, Soriatane)
  - c. Phototherapy
  - ii. Already tried a biologic or targeted synthetic DMARD (tsDMARD) for Plaque Psoriasis
  - D. Medication is prescribed by, or in consultation with, a dermatologist
- 2. Psoriatic Arthritis.** Individual meets **ALL** of the following criteria:
- A. 18 years of age or older
  - B. Documentation of **ONE** of the following:
    - i. For Non-axial disease, failure to **ONE** disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drug (DMARD), unless contraindicated or intolerant
    - ii. For Axial disease, failure to **ONE** disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drug (DMARD), OR a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), unless contraindicated or intolerant
    - iii. Already tried a biologic or targeted synthetic DMARD (tsDMARD)
  - C. Medication is being prescribed by, or in consultation with, a rheumatologist or dermatologist

**Coverage varies across plans and requires the use of preferred products. Refer to the customer's benefit plan document for coverage details.**

Employer Group Plans	
Condition	Criteria
Plaque Psoriasis - Adult	<b>Preferred</b> [requires prior authorization]
Psoriatic Arthritis - Adult	

Individual and Family Plan Covered Alternatives:	
Condition	Criteria
Plaque Psoriasis - Adult	<b>Preferred</b> [requires prior authorization]
Psoriatic Arthritis - Adult	

When coverage is available and medically necessary, the dosage, frequency, duration of therapy, and site of care should be reasonable, clinically appropriate, and supported by evidence-based literature and adjusted based upon severity, alternative available treatments, and previous response to therapy.

## Reauthorization Criteria

Continuation of guselkumab (Tremfya) is considered medically necessary for **ALL** covered diagnoses when initial criteria are met AND beneficial response is demonstrated.

## Authorization Duration

Initial approval duration is up to 12 months.  
Reauthorization approval duration is up to 12 months.

## Conditions Not Covered

Any other use is considered experimental, investigational or unproven, including the following (this list may not be all inclusive):

**Concurrent Use with other Biologics or with Targeted Synthetic Disease-Modifying Antirheumatic Drugs (DMARDs).** Data are lacking evaluating concomitant use of Tremfya in combination with another biologic or with a targeted synthetic DMARD for an inflammatory condition (see [Appendix](#) for examples). Combination therapy with other biologics and/or targeted synthetic DMARDs has a potential for a higher rate of adverse effects and lacks controlled trial data in support of additive efficacy.

This does NOT exclude the use of methotrexate (a traditional systemic agent used to treat psoriasis) in combination with Tremfya.

## Background

### OVERVIEW

Tremfya, an interleukin (IL)-23 blocker, is indicated for the following uses:<sup>1</sup>

- **Plaque psoriasis**, in adults with moderate to severe disease who are candidates for systemic therapy or phototherapy.
- **Psoriatic arthritis**, in adults with active disease (given ± a conventional synthetic disease-modifying antirheumatic drug).

### Guidelines

IL blockers are mentioned in guidelines for treatment of inflammatory conditions.

- **Plaque Psoriasis:** Joint guidelines from the American Academy of Dermatology and National Psoriasis Medical Board (2019) have been published for management of psoriasis with biologics.<sup>2</sup> These guidelines list Tremfya as a monotherapy treatment option for patients with moderate to severe plaque psoriasis. It is recommended that a response to therapy be ascertained after 12 weeks of continuous therapy. Guidelines from the European Dermatology Forum (2015) recommend biologics (i.e., etanercept, adalimumab, infliximab, Stelara subcutaneous) as second-line therapy for induction and long-term treatment if phototherapy and conventional systemic agents have failed, are contraindicated, or are not tolerated.<sup>3</sup>
- **Psoriatic Arthritis:** Guidelines from the American College of Rheumatology/National Psoriasis Foundation (2018) were published prior to approval of Tremfya for psoriatic arthritis. However, these guidelines generally recommend tumor necrosis factor inhibitors as the first-line treatment strategy over other biologics (e.g., IL-17 blockers, IL-12/23 inhibitor) with differing mechanisms of action.<sup>4</sup>

## References

1. Tremfya® subcutaneous injection [prescribing information]. Horsham, PA: Janssen Biotech/Johnson & Johnson July 2020.
2. 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.
3. Nast A, Gisondi P, Ormerod AD, et al. European S3-Guidelines on the systemic treatment of psoriasis vulgaris – Update 2015 – Short version – EDF in cooperation with EADV and IPC. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol.* 2015;29(12):2277-2294.
4. Singh JA, Guyatt G, Ogdie A, et al. 2018 American College of Rheumatology/National Psoriasis Foundation guideline for the treatment of psoriatic arthritis. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2019;71(1):5-32.

## APPENDIX

Table 1. Approved TNFIs for Targeted Indications.

	Rheumatology	Dermatology	Gastroenterology
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	RA	JIA	AS	nr-axSpA	PsA	PsO	CD	UC
<b>Tumor Necrosis Factor Inhibitors</b>								
Cimzia	√	--	√	√	√	√	√	--
Enbrel	√	√	√	--	√	√	--	--
Humira	√	√	√	--	√	√	√	√
Infliximab Products	√	--	√	--	√	√	√	√
Simponi Subcutaneous	√	--	√	--	√	--	--	√
Simponi Aria	√	√	√	--	√	--	--	--

TNFis – Tumor necrosis factor inhibitors; RA – Rheumatoid arthritis; JIA – Juvenile idiopathic arthritis; AS – Ankylosing spondylitis; nr-axSpA – Non-radiographic spondyloarthritis; PsA – Psoriatic arthritis; PsO – Plaque psoriasis; CD – Crohn's disease; UC – Ulcerative colitis.

**Table 2. Approved IL-17, IL-23, and IL-12/23 Blockers for Targeted Indications.**

	Rheumatology			Dermatology	Gastroenterology	
	Ankylosing Spondylitis	nr-axSpA	Psoriatic Arthritis	Plaque Psoriasis	Crohn's Disease	Ulcerative Colitis
<b>Interleukin-17 Blockers</b>						
Cosentyx	√	√	√	√	--	--
Siliq	--	--	--	√	--	--
Taltz	√	√	√	√	--	--
<b>Interleukin-23 Blockers</b>						
Ilumya	--	--	--	√	√	--
Skyrizi Intravenous	--	--	--	--	√ <sup>#</sup>	--
Skyrizi Subcutaneous	--	--	√	√	√ <sup>^</sup>	--
Tremfya	--	--	√	√	--	--
<b>Interleukin-12/23 Blockers</b>						
Stelara Subcutaneous	--	--	√	√	√ <sup>^</sup>	√ <sup>^</sup>
Stelara Intravenous	--	--	--	--	√ <sup>#</sup>	√ <sup>#</sup>

IL – Interleukin; nr-axSpA – Non-radiographic spondyloarthritis; <sup>^</sup> Maintenance dosing only; <sup>#</sup> Induction dosing only.

**Table 3. Approved Oral tsDMARDs for Targeted Indications.**

	Rheumatology					Dermatology	Gastro-enterology
	Rheumatoid Arthritis	Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis	Ankylosing Spondylitis	nr-axSpA	Psoriatic Arthritis	Plaque Psoriasis	Ulcerative Colitis
<b>Janus Kinases Inhibitors</b>							
Olumiant	√	--	--	--	--	--	--
Rinvoq	√	--	√	√	√	--	√
Xeljanz tablets	√	√ <sup>#</sup>	√	--	√	--	√
Xeljanz oral solution	--	√ <sup>#</sup>	--	--	--	--	--
Xeljanz XR	√	--	√	--	√	--	√
<b>Phosphodiesterase Type 4 Inhibitor</b>							
Otezla	--	--	--	--	√	√	--
<b>Sphingosine 1-Phosphate Receptor Modulator</b>							
Zeposia	--	--	--	--	--	--	√
<b>Tyrosine Kinase 2 Inhibitor</b>							
Sotykta	--	--	--	--	--	√	--

tsDMARDs – Targeted synthetic disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs; <sup>#</sup> Indicated in polyarticular JIA.

**Table 4. Other Approved Biologics for Targeted Indications.**

	Rheumatology		
	Rheumatoid Arthritis	Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis	Psoriatic Arthritis
<b>Interleukin-6 Blockers</b>			
Actemra Intravenous	✓	√^	--
Actemra Subcutaneous	✓	√^	--
Kevzara	✓	--	--
<b>Interleukin-1 Blocker</b>			
Kineret	✓	--	--
<b>T-Cell Costimulation Modulator</b>			
Orencia Intravenous	✓	√#	✓
Orencia Subcutaneous	✓	√#	✓
<b>CD20-Directed Cytolytic Antibody</b>			
Rituximab Intravenous Products	✓	--	--

<sup>^</sup> Indicated in polyarticular and systemic JIA; <sup>#</sup> Indicated in polyarticular JIA.

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