

Important update regarding Retacrit shortage

Pfizer recently announced there will be a shortage of Retacrit occurring in late May 2022. This specialty medication is used to help stimulate red blood cell production and can be covered under the medical or pharmacy benefits per the member's benefit plans. Pfizer anticipates a return to normal supply in early fourth quarter of 2022.

Why is there a Retacrit drug shortage?

The shortage is due to manufacturing capacity constraints due to reprioritizations of Pfizer's third-party contracted manufacturers during the COVID pandemic. This manufacturer supply shortage will impact members nationwide under all insurers, including those covered under Blue Shield of California.

What action is Blue Shield taking to minimize the shortage disruption?

Beginning April 3, 2022, for current Blue Shield members with active Retacrit authorizations, a courtesy authorization for Procrit/Epogen will be placed. Its expiration date will be the same as the existing Retacrit prior authorization or the end of the year, whichever comes first. Blue Shield members may require a new prescription or order for the Procrit/Epogen for uninterrupted treatment as appropriate; CVS Specialty Pharmacy, which dispenses this specialty medication, will facilitate outreach to providers to secure the new prescription.

For new requests of Procrit/Epogen, a prior authorization will still be required and will be approved as long as the drug shortage is the reason cited.

Thank you for continuing to put your trust in Blue Shield to ensure your members receive safe and effective medications at all times.