

Clinical Policy: Cetuximab (Erbix)

Reference Number: CP.PHAR.317

Effective Date: 02.01.17

Last Review Date: 11.21

Line of Business: Commercial, HIM, Medicaid

[Coding Implications](#)

[Revision Log](#)

See [Important Reminder](#) at the end of this policy for important regulatory and legal information.

Description

Cetuximab (Erbix[®]) is an epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) antagonist.

FDA Approved Indication(s)

Erbix is indicated for treatment of:

- Head and neck cancer (HNSCC)
 - Locally or regionally advanced squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck in combination with radiation therapy
 - Recurrent locoregional disease or metastatic squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck in combination with platinum-based therapy with fluorouracil (5-FU)
 - Recurrent or metastatic squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck progressing after platinum-based therapy
- Colorectal cancer (CRC)
 - *K-Ras* wild-type, EGFR-expressing, metastatic CRC as determined by an FDA-approved test
 - In combination with FOLFIRI for first-line treatment
 - In combination with irinotecan in patients who are refractory to irinotecan-based chemotherapy
 - As a single agent in patients who have failed oxaliplatin- and irinotecan-based chemotherapy or who are intolerant to irinotecan
 - BRAF V600E Mutation-Positive Metastatic CRC
 - In combination with encorafenib, for the treatment of adult patients with metastatic CRC with a BRAF V600E mutation, as detected by an FDA-approved test, after prior therapy.

Limitation(s) of use: Erbix is not indicated for treatment of *Ras*-mutant CRC or when the results of the *Ras* mutation tests are unknown.

Policy/Criteria

Provider must submit documentation (such as office chart notes, lab results or other clinical information) supporting that member has met all approval criteria.

It is the policy of health plans affiliated with Centene Corporation[®] that Erbix is **medically necessary** when the following criteria are met:

I. Initial Approval Criteria

A. Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of HNSCC (*see Appendix D for subtypes by location*);
 2. Prescribed by or in consultation with an oncologist;
 3. Age \geq 18 years;
 4. Disease is advanced, recurrent, or metastatic;
 5. Prescribed as one of the following (a or b)
 - a. As a single agent;
 - b. In combination with platinum-based therapy (e.g., cisplatin or carboplatin) with 5-FU;*
- *Prior authorization may be required for platinum-based therapies and 5-FU.*
6. For brand Erbitux requests, member must use generic cetuximab, if available, unless contraindicated or clinically significant adverse effects are experienced;
 7. Request meets one of the following (a, b, or c):*
 - a. Dose does not exceed an initial dose of 400 mg/m² followed by 250 mg/m² weekly thereafter;
 - b. Dose does not exceed 500 mg/m² every 2 weeks;
 - c. Dose is supported by practice guidelines or peer-reviewed literature for the relevant off-label use (*prescriber must submit supporting evidence*).
- *Prescribed regimen must be FDA-approved or recommended by NCCN*

Approval duration: 6 months

B. Colorectal Cancer (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of CRC;
 2. Prescribed by or in consultation with an oncologist;
 3. Age \geq 18 years;
 4. Disease is one of the following (a, b, or c)
 - a. Wild-type *RAS* (defined as wild-type in both *KRAS* and *NRAS*);
 - b. BRAF wild-type;
 - c. BRAF V600E mutation positive;
 5. One of the following (a or b):*
 - a. Request for use as a single agent or in combination with FOLFIRI, FOLFOX, or irinotecan in the initial or subsequent line setting;
 - b. Prescribed in combination with Braftovi[®] if BRAF V600E mutation positive;
- *Prior authorization may be required*
6. For brand Erbitux requests, member must use generic cetuximab, if available, unless contraindicated or clinically significant adverse effects are experienced;
 7. Request meets one of the following (a, b, or c):*
 - a. Dose does not exceed an initial dose of 400 mg/m² followed by 250 mg/m² weekly thereafter;
 - b. Dose does not exceed 500 mg/m² every 2 weeks;
 - c. Dose is supported by practice guidelines or peer-reviewed literature for the relevant off-label use (*prescriber must submit supporting evidence*).
- *Prescribed regimen must be FDA-approved or recommended by NCCN*

Approval duration: 6 months

C. Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (off-label) (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of metastatic non-small cell lung cancer;
2. Prescribed by or in consultation with an oncologist;

3. Age \geq 18 years;
4. Tumor is positive for a sensitizing EGFR mutation and T790M negative;
5. Disease has progressed on or after an EGFR tyrosine kinase inhibitor (TKI) therapy (e.g., Tarceva[®], Gilotrif[®], or Iressa[®]);*
**Prior authorization may be required for EGFR TKI therapies*
6. Prescribed in combination with Gilotrif as subsequent therapy;*
**Prior authorization may be required for Gilotrif*
7. For brand Erbitux requests, member must use generic cetuximab, if available, unless contraindicated or clinically significant adverse effects are experienced;
8. Dose is within FDA maximum limit for any FDA-approved indication or is supported by practice guidelines or peer-reviewed literature for the relevant off-label use (*prescriber must submit supporting evidence*).*
**Prescribed regimen must be FDA-approved or recommended by NCCN*

Approval duration: 6 months

D. Penile Cancer (off-label) (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of metastatic penile cancer;
2. Prescribed by or in consultation with an oncologist;
3. Age \geq 18 years;
4. Request is for use as a single agent as subsequent-line systemic therapy;
5. For brand Erbitux requests, member must use generic cetuximab, if available, unless contraindicated or clinically significant adverse effects are experienced;
6. Dose is within FDA maximum limit for any FDA-approved indication or is supported by practice guidelines or peer-reviewed literature for the relevant off-label use (*prescriber must submit supporting evidence*).*
**Prescribed regimen must be FDA-approved or recommended by NCCN*

Approval duration: 6 months

E. Squamous Cell Skin Cancer (off-label) (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of basal cell carcinoma (non-melanoma), squamous cell skin cancer;
2. Prescribed by or in consultation with an oncologist;
3. Age \geq 18 years;
4. Disease is locally advanced, high-risk, very high-risk, inoperable or not fully resectable;
5. For brand Erbitux requests, member must use generic cetuximab, if available, unless contraindicated or clinically significant adverse effects are experienced;
6. Dose is within FDA maximum limit for any FDA-approved indication or is supported by practice guidelines or peer-reviewed literature for the relevant off-label use (*prescriber must submit supporting evidence*).*
**Prescribed regimen must be FDA-approved or recommended by NCCN*

Approval duration: 6 months

F. Other diagnoses/indications

1. Refer to the off-label use policy for the relevant line of business if diagnosis is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized): CP.CPA.09 for commercial, HIM.PA.154 for health insurance marketplace, CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid, and HIM-Medical Benefit.

II. Continued Therapy

A. All Indications in Section I (must meet all):

1. Currently receiving medication via Centene benefit, or documentation supports that member is currently receiving Erbitux for a covered indication and has received this medication for at least 30 days;
2. Member is responding positively to therapy;
3. If request is for a dose increase, request meets one of the following (a or b):*
 - a. For HNSCC or CRC: new dose does not exceed 250 mg/m² weekly or 500 mg/m² every 2 weeks;
 - b. New dose is supported by practice guidelines or peer-reviewed literature for the relevant off-label use (*prescriber must submit supporting evidence*).

*Prescribed regimen must be FDA-approved or recommended by NCCN

Approval duration: 12 months

B. Other diagnoses/indications (must meet 1 or 2):

1. Currently receiving medication via Centene benefit and documentation supports positive response to therapy.
Approval duration: Duration of request or 6 months (whichever is less); or
2. Refer to the off-label use policy for the relevant line of business if diagnosis is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized): CP.CPA.09 for commercial, HIM.PA.154 for health insurance marketplace, and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid.

III. Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized:

- ### A. Non-FDA approved indications, which are not addressed in this policy, unless there is sufficient documentation of efficacy and safety according to the off label use policies – CP.CPA.09 for commercial, HIM.PA.154 for health insurance marketplace, and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid or evidence of coverage documents.

IV. Appendices/General Information

Appendix A: Abbreviation/Acronym Key

5-FU: fluorouracil

CRC: colorectal cancer

EGFR: epidermal growth factor receptor

FDA: Food and Drug Administration

FOLFIRI: fluorouracil, leucovorin, irinotecan

FOLFOX: fluorouracil, leucovorin, oxaliplatin

FOLFOXIRI: fluorouracil, leucovorin, oxaliplatin, irinotecan

HER: human epidermal growth factor receptor

HNSCC: head and neck squamous cell carcinoma

KRAS: Kirsten rat sarcoma 2 viral oncogene homologue

NRAS: neuroblastoma RAS viral oncogene homologue

Appendix B: Therapeutic Alternatives

This table provides a listing of preferred alternative therapy recommended in the approval criteria. The drugs listed here may not be a formulary agent for all relevant lines of business and may require prior authorization.

Drug Name	Dosing Regimen	Dose Limit/ Maximum Dose
Modified FOLFOX 6	CRC Day 1: oxaliplatin 85 mg/m ² IV Day 1: Folinic acid 400 mg/m ² IV Days 1–3: 5-FU 400 mg/m ² IV bolus on day 1, then 1,200 mg/m ² /day × 2 days (total 2,400 mg/m ² over 46–48 hours) IV continuous infusion Repeat cycle every 2 weeks.	See dosing regimen
CapeOX	CRC Day 1: Oxaliplatin 130 mg/m ² IV Days 1–14: Capecitabine 1,000 mg/m ² PO BID Repeat cycle every 3 weeks.	See dosing regimen
FOLFIRI	CRC Day 1: Irinotecan 180 mg/m ² IV Day 1: Leucovorin 400 mg/m ² IV Day 1: Flurouracil 400 mg/m ² IV followed by 2,400 mg/m ² continuous IV over 46 hours Repeat cycle every 14 days.	See dosing regimen
FOLFOXIRI	CRC Day 1: Irinotecan 165 mg/m ² IV, oxaliplatin 85 mg/m ² IV, leucovorin 400 mg/m ² IV, flurouracil 1,600 mg/m ² continuous IV for 2 days (total 3,200 mg/m ²) Repeat cycle every 2 weeks.	See dosing regimen
Gilotrif (afatinib)	Metastatic NSCLC 40 mg PO QD	40 mg/day; 50 mg/day when on chronic concomitant therapy with a P-gp inducer
Iressa (gefitinib)	Metastatic NSCLC 250 mg PO QD	250 mg/day; 500 mg/day when used with a strong CYP3A4 inducer
Tarceva (erlotinib)	Metastatic NSCLC 150 mg PO QD	150 mg/day; 450 mg/day when used with a strong CYP3A4 inducer or 300 mg/day when used with a moderate CYP1A2 inducer

Drug Name	Dosing Regimen	Dose Limit/ Maximum Dose
TIP (paclitaxel, ifosfamide, cisplatin)	Penile Cancer Paclitaxel 175 mg/m ² IV on day 1; ifosfamide 1,200 mg/m ² IV on day 1-3; cisplatin 25 mg/m ² IV on day 1-3 Repeat every 3 to 4 weeks.	See dosing regimen
5-FU, cisplatin, carboplatin	HNSCC cisplatin 100 mg/m ² IV or carboplatin AUC 5 IV on day 1, plus 5-FU 1,000 mg/m ² IV on days 1, 2, 3, and 4, repeated every 3 weeks Penile Cancer 5-FU 800 - 1,000 mg/m ² /day continuous IV on days 1-4 or 2-5; cisplatin 70-80 mg/m ² IV on day 1 Repeat every 3 to 4 weeks.	See dosing regimen
Braftovi (encorafenib)	CRC 300 mg PO once daily in combination with cetuximab (400 mg/m ² IV over 120 minutes on day 1 followed by weekly infusions of cetuximab 250 mg/m ² IV over 60 minutes) until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity.	450 mg/day.

Therapeutic alternatives are listed as Brand name[®] (generic) when the drug is available by brand name only and generic (Brand name[®]) when the drug is available by both brand and generic.

Appendix C: Contraindications/Boxed Warnings

- Contraindication(s): none reported
- Boxed warning(s): infusions reactions, cardiopulmonary arrest

*Appendix D: Head and Neck Squamous Cell Cancers by Location**

- Paranasal sinuses (ethmoid, maxillary)
- Larynx (glottis, supraglottis)
- Pharynx (nasopharynx, oropharynx, hypopharynx)
- Lip and oral cavity
- Major salivary glands (parotid, submandibular, sublingual)
- Occult primary

*Squamous cell carcinoma, or a variant, is the histologic type in more than 90% of head and neck cancers.

V. Dosage and Administration

Indication	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
HNSCC, CRC	Weekly schedule: initial dose 400 mg/m ² IV followed by 250 mg/m ² IV weekly Biweekly schedule: initial and subsequent doses 500 mg/m ² IV every 2 weeks	See dosing regimen

VI. Product Availability

Single-dose vials: 100 mg/50 mL, 200 mg/100 mL

VII. References

1. Erbitux Prescribing Information. Indianapolis, IN: Eli Lilly and Company; November 2021. Available at: <http://uspl.lilly.com/erbitux/erbitux.html>. Accessed October 7, 2021.
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3. National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Colon Cancer Version 2.2021. Available at: https://www.nccn.org/professionals/physician_gls/pdf/colon.pdf. Accessed July 20, 2021.
4. National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Rectal Cancer Version 1.2021. Available at: https://www.nccn.org/professionals/physician_gls/pdf/rectal.pdf. Accessed July 20, 2021.
5. National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Head and Neck Cancer Version 3.2021. Available at: https://www.nccn.org/professionals/physician_gls/pdf/head-and-neck.pdf. Accessed July 20, 2021.
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8. National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Squamous Cell Skin Cancer 1.2021. Available at: https://www.nccn.org/professionals/physician_gls/pdf/squamous.pdf. Accessed July 20, 2021.
9. Cosyntropin Drug Monograph. Clinical Pharmacology. Tampa, FL: Gold Standard Inc.; 2020. Available at: <http://www.clinicalpharmacology-ip.com>. Accessed July 20, 2021.

Coding Implications

Codes referenced in this clinical policy are for informational purposes only. Inclusion or exclusion of any codes does not guarantee coverage. Providers should reference the most up-to-date sources of professional coding guidance prior to the submission of claims for reimbursement of covered services.

HCPCS Codes	Description
J9055	Injection, cetuximab, 10 mg

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	P&T Approval Date
4Q 2018 annual review: no significant changes; added Commercial and HIM lines of business; summarized NCCN and FDA-approved uses for improved clarity; added specialist involvement in care; references reviewed and updated.	07.25.18	11.18
4Q 2019 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	08.13.19	11.19
4Q 2020 annual review: added criteria to HNSCC indication for use as single agent or in combination with platinum based therapy with 5-FU; added BRAF disease wild-type and for treatment in combination with Braftovi if BRAF V600E mutation position to colorectal indication as per NCCN 2A or above off label indication; references reviewed and updated.	08.17.20	11.20
Updated HNSCC and CRC dosing to include biweekly dosing option per updated prescribing information.	05.26.21	
4Q 2021 annual review: for CRC simplified requirements for prior and combination therapy to align more closely with New Century Health criteria; updated place in therapy for penile and squamous cell skin cancer per NCCN Compendium; for brand name requests added requirement for trial of generic equivalent if available; revised reference from HIM.PHAR.21 to HIM.PA.154; RT4: updated FDA approved indications to include use in combination with encorafenib in adult patients with metastatic CRC with a BRAF V600E mutation; references reviewed and updated.	07.20.21	11.21

Important Reminder

This clinical policy has been developed by appropriately experienced and licensed health care professionals based on a review and consideration of currently available generally accepted standards of medical practice; peer-reviewed medical literature; government agency/program approval status; evidence-based guidelines and positions of leading national health professional organizations; views of physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas affected by this clinical policy; and other available clinical information. The Health Plan makes no representations and accepts no liability with respect to the content of any external information used or relied upon in developing this clinical policy. This clinical policy is consistent with standards of medical practice current at the time that this clinical policy was approved. “Health Plan” means a health plan that has adopted this clinical policy and that is operated or administered, in whole or in part, by Centene Management Company, LLC, or any of such health plan’s affiliates, as applicable.

The purpose of this clinical policy is to provide a guide to medical necessity, which is a component of the guidelines used to assist in making coverage decisions and administering benefits. It does not constitute a contract or guarantee regarding payment or results. Coverage decisions and the administration of benefits are subject to all terms, conditions, exclusions and limitations of the coverage documents (e.g., evidence of coverage, certificate of coverage, policy,

contract of insurance, etc.), as well as to state and federal requirements and applicable Health Plan-level administrative policies and procedures.

This clinical policy is effective as of the date determined by the Health Plan. The date of posting may not be the effective date of this clinical policy. This clinical policy may be subject to applicable legal and regulatory requirements relating to provider notification. If there is a discrepancy between the effective date of this clinical policy and any applicable legal or regulatory requirement, the requirements of law and regulation shall govern. The Health Plan retains the right to change, amend or withdraw this clinical policy, and additional clinical policies may be developed and adopted as needed, at any time.

This clinical policy does not constitute medical advice, medical treatment or medical care. It is not intended to dictate to providers how to practice medicine. Providers are expected to exercise professional medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care, and are solely responsible for the medical advice and treatment of members. This clinical policy is not intended to recommend treatment for members. Members should consult with their treating physician in connection with diagnosis and treatment decisions.

Providers referred to in this clinical policy are independent contractors who exercise independent judgment and over whom the Health Plan has no control or right of control. Providers are not agents or employees of the Health Plan.

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Note:

For Medicaid members, when state Medicaid coverage provisions conflict with the coverage provisions in this clinical policy, state Medicaid coverage provisions take precedence. Please refer to the state Medicaid manual for any coverage provisions pertaining to this clinical policy.

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