



Original Effective Date: 10/01/2018
Current Effective Date: 09/10/2025
Last P&T Approval/Version: 07/30/2025
Next Review Due By: 07/2026
Policy Number: C15214-A

Iron Chelating Agents (Desferal, Exjade, Ferriprox, Jadenu)

PRODUCTS AFFECTED

deferasirox, deferiprone, deferoxamine, Desferal (deferoxamine), Exjade (deferasirox), Ferriprox (deferiprone), Jadenu (deferasirox))

COVERAGE POLICY

Coverage for services, procedures, medical devices, and drugs are dependent upon benefit eligibility as outlined in the member's specific benefit plan. This Coverage Guideline must be read in its entirety to determine coverage eligibility, if any. This Coverage Guideline provides information related to coverage determinations only and does not imply that a service or treatment is clinically appropriate or inappropriate. The provider and the member are responsible for all decisions regarding the appropriateness of care. Providers should provide Molina Healthcare complete medical rationale when requesting any exceptions to these guidelines.

Documentation Requirements:

Molina Healthcare reserves the right to require that additional documentation be made available as part of its coverage determination; quality improvement; and fraud; waste and abuse prevention processes. Documentation required may include, but is not limited to, patient records, test results and credentials of the provider ordering or performing a drug or service. Molina Healthcare may deny reimbursement or take additional appropriate action if the documentation provided does not support the initial determination that the drugs or services were medically necessary, not investigational or experimental, and otherwise within the scope of benefits afforded to the member, and/or the documentation demonstrates a pattern of billing or other practice that is inappropriate or excessive.

DIAGNOSIS:

Acute iron intoxication, Chronic iron overload due to blood transfusions (transfusional iron overload), Chronic iron overload in non-transfusion dependent thalassemia syndromes, Transfusional iron overload due to thalassemia syndromes

REQUIRED MEDICAL INFORMATION:

This clinical policy is consistent with standards of medical practice current at the time that this clinical policy was approved. If a drug within this policy receives an updated FDA label within the last 180 days, medical necessity for the member will be reviewed using the updated FDA label information along with state and federal requirements, benefit being administered and formulary preferencing. Coverage will be determined on a case-by case basis until the criteria can be updated through Molina Healthcare, Inc. clinical governance. Additional information may be required on a case-by-case basis to allow for adequate review. When the requested drug product for coverage is dosed by weight, body surface area or other member specific measurement, this data element is required as part of the medical necessity review. The Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee has determined that the drug benefit shall be a mandatory generic and that generic drugs will be dispensed whenever available.

A. FOR EXJADE/JADENU (DEFERASIROX):

Drug and Biologic Coverage Criteria

1. Documentation of either of the following diagnosis:
 - (a) i. Chronic transfusional iron overload due to blood transfusions
AND
ii. Transfusion history of ≥ 100 mL/kg of packed red blood cells (e.g., ≥ 20 units of packed red blood cells for a 40 kg person) AND a serum ferritin level $> 1,000$ mcg/L [DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED]
OR
 - (b) i. Chronic iron overload resulting from non-transfusion dependent thalassemia (NTDT) AND
ii. Documentation of a liver iron concentration (LIC) greater than or equal to 5 milligrams of iron per gram of liver dry weight (mg Fe/g dw) and a serum ferritin greater than 300 mcg/L. [DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED]
AND
 2. Prescriber attests to (or the clinical reviewer has found that) the member not having any FDA labeled contraindications that haven't been addressed by the prescriber within the documentation submitted for review [Contraindications to deferasirox include: estimated GFR less than 40 mL/min/1.73 m², poor performance status, high-risk myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS), advanced malignancies, platelet count less than $50 \times 10^9/L$, known hypersensitivity to deferasirox or any component of the requested product, avoid use in patients with severe (Child-Pugh C) hepatic impairment, avoid use with nephrotoxic drugs]
AND
 3. IF THE REQUEST NON-FORMULARY/ NON-PREFERRED PRODUCT: Documentation of trial/failure of or serious side effects to a majority (not more than 3) of the preferred formulary/PDL alternatives for the given diagnosis. Submit documentation including medication(s) tried, dates of trial(s) and reason for treatment failure(s).
- B. FOR FERRIPROX (DEFERIPRONE):**
1. Documented diagnosis of transfusional iron overload due to thalassemia syndrome, sickle cell disease or other anemias
AND
 2. Documentation of an inadequate response (as defined by serum ferritin $>2,500$ mcg/L), serious side effects, or a labeled contraindication to deferoxamine AND deferasirox
AND
 3. Documentation serum ferritin levels are consistently > 2500 mcg/L demonstrated by at least 2 lab values in the previous 3 months [DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED]
AND
 4. Documentation of member's absolute neutrophil count (ANC) $>1.5 \times 10^9/L$ [DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED]
- C. FOR DESFERAL (DEFEROXAMINE):**
1. Documentation of either of the following diagnosis:
 - (a) Acute iron intoxication
OR
 - (b) i. Chronic iron overload due to transfusion-dependent anemia (e.g., congenital/acquired anemias including thalassemia, sickle cell anemia, aplastic anemia, myelodysplasia)
AND
ii. Member has a Transfusion history of ≥ 100 mL/kg of packed red blood cells (e.g., ≥ 20 units of packed red blood cells for a 40 kg person) AND a serum ferritin level $>1,000$ mcg/L [DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED]
AND
 2. Prescriber attests to (or the clinical reviewer has found that) the member not having any FDA labeled contraindications that haven't been addressed by the prescriber within the documentation submitted for review [Contraindications to deferoxamine include: known hypersensitivity to the active substance, patients with severe renal disease or anuria.]

Drug and Biologic Coverage Criteria

CONTINUATION OF THERAPY:

A. FOR EXJADE/JADENU (DEFERASIROX): CHRONIC IRON OVERLOAD DUE TO BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS:

1. Documentation showing member's current (within last 30 days) serum ferritin level ≥ 500 mcg/L [DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED]
AND
2. Prescriber attests to continued serum ferritin level monitoring and adjusting member's dose, if necessary, every 3 to 6 months based on serum ferritin levels
AND
3. At time of request, member's estimated glomerular filtration rate is NOT less than 40mL/min/1.73m² or platelet count less than 50 x 10⁹/L (contraindications)
AND
4. Prescriber attests to or clinical reviewer has found no evidence of intolerable adverse effects or drug toxicity

B. FOR EXJADE/JADENU (DEFERASIROX): CHRONIC IRON OVERLOAD DUE TO NON-TRANSFUSION DEPENDENT THALASSEMIA SYNDROME:

1. Documentation of ONE of the following [DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED]:
 - (a) If member has received < 6 months of Exjade/Jadenu, a serum ferritin level ≥ 300 mcg/L or an LIC ≥ 3 mg Fe/g dw
OR
 - (b) If member has received ≥ 6 months of Exjade/Jadenu, an LIC is ≥ 3 mg Fe/g dw
AND
2. At time of request, member's estimated glomerular filtration rate is NOT less than 40 mL/min/1.73m² or platelet count less than 50 x 10⁹/L (contraindications)
AND
3. Prescriber attests to or clinical reviewer has found no evidence of intolerable adverse effects or drug toxicity

C. FOR FERRIPROX (DEFERIPRONE): TRANSFUSIONAL IRON OVERLOAD DUE TO THALASSEMIA SYNDROME, SICKLE CELL DISEASE OR OTHER ANEMIAS:

1. Documentation of current (within the past 30 days) member's serum ferritin level ≥ 500 mcg/L [DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED]
AND
2. Prescriber attests to or clinical reviewer has found no evidence of intolerable adverse effects or drug toxicity

D. FOR DESFERAL (DEFEROXAMINE): CHRONIC IRON OVERLOAD DUE TO BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS:

1. Documentation showing member's current (within last 30 days) serum ferritin level ≥ 500 mcg/L [DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED]
AND
2. Prescriber attests to or clinical reviewer has found no evidence of intolerable adverse effects or drug toxicity

DURATION OF APPROVAL:

ACUTE IRON TOXICITY: Initial authorization: 3 months, Continuation of therapy: NA

ALL OTHER INDICATIONS: Initial authorization: 6 months, Continuation of Therapy: 12 months

MOLINA REVIEWER NOTE: For Illinois Marketplace, , please see Appendix.

PRESCRIBER REQUIREMENTS:

Prescribed by or in consultation with a board-certified hematologist or oncologist. [If prescribed in consultation, consultation notes must be submitted with initial request and reauthorization requests]

Drug and Biologic Coverage Criteria

AGE RESTRICTIONS:

Exjade/Jadenu:

Transfusional iron overload: 2 years of age and older

Chronic iron overload in non-transfusion dependent thalassemia (NTDT): 10 years of age and older

Ferriprox: Tablets: 8 years of age and older; Oral Solution: 3 years of age and older

Desferal: 3 years of age and older

QUANTITY:

Desferal (deferroxamine):

Acute Iron Toxicity:

IM: 1000 mg initially. This may be followed by 500 mg every 4 hours for two doses. Depending upon the clinical response, subsequent doses of 500 mg may be administered every 4-12 hours. The total amount administered should not exceed 6000 mg in 24 hours.

IV: Initial dose of 1000 mg, followed by 500 mg over 4 hours for two doses. Depending upon the clinical response, subsequent doses of 500 mg may be administered over 4-12 hours. The total amount administered should not exceed 6000 mg in 24 hours.

Chronic Iron Overload:

SC: 20-60 mg/kg/day (It is not advisable to regularly exceed an average daily dose of 50 mg/kg/day except when very intensive chelation is needed in patients who have completed growth.)

IV: Maximum 40 mg/kg/day for children and maximum 60 mg/kg/day in adults

IM: 1000 mg/day

Exjade (deferasirox):

Transfusional Iron Overload: Initial: 20 mg/kg/day. Maximum: 40 mg/kg/day

NTDT Syndromes: Initial: 10 mg/kg/day. Maximum: 20 mg/kg/day

Jadenu (deferasirox):

Transfusional Iron Overload: Initial: 14 mg/kg/day. Maximum: 28mg/kg/day

NTDT Syndromes: Initial: 7 mg/kg/day. Maximum: 14 mg/kg/day

Ferriprox (deferiprone) tablets and oral solution:

Initial: 75mg/kg/day. Maximum dose: 99 mg/kg/day.

PLACE OF ADMINISTRATION:

Desferal (deferroxamine): The recommendation is that infused and injectable medications in this policy will be for pharmacy or medical benefit coverage and the intramuscular or subcutaneous injectable products be administered in a place of service that is a non-inpatient hospital facility- based location.

Exjade (deferasirox), Jadenu (deferasirox) and Ferriprox (deferiprone):

The recommendation is that oral medications in this policy will be for pharmacy benefit coverage and patient self-administered.

DRUG INFORMATION

ROUTE OF ADMINISTRATION:

Oral, Intramuscular, Intravenous, Subcutaneous

DRUG CLASS:

Antidotes - Chelating Agents

FDA-APPROVED USES:

Desferal (deferroxamine):

Indicated as an adjunct to standard measures for the treatment of acute iron intoxication and for the treatment of transfusional iron overload in patients with chronic anemia.

Limitations of Use: Desferal is not indicated for the treatment of primary hemochromatosis (since

Drug and Biologic Coverage Criteria

phlebotomy is the method of choice for removing excess iron in this disorder).

Exjade/Jadenu (deferasirox):

Indicated for the treatment of chronic iron overload due to blood transfusions in patients 2 years of age and older; for the treatment of chronic iron overload in patients 10 years of age and older with non-transfusion dependent thalassemia (NTDT) syndromes, and with a liver iron (Fe) concentration (LIC) of at least 5 mg Fe per gram of dry weight and a serum ferritin greater than 300 mcg/L.

Limitations of Use: The safety and efficacy of Exjade and Jadenu when administered with other iron chelation therapy have not been established.

Ferriprox (deferiprone) tablets:

Indicated for the treatment of transfusional iron overload in adult and pediatric patients 8 years of age and older with sickle cell disease or other anemias.

Ferriprox (deferiprone) oral solution:

Indicated for the treatment of transfusional iron overload in adult and pediatric patients 3 years of age and older with thalassemia syndromes, sickle cell disease or other anemias.

Limitations of use: Safety and effectiveness have not been established for the treatment of transfusional iron overload in patients with myelodysplastic syndrome or in patients with Diamond Blackfan anemia.

COMPENDIAL APPROVED OFF-LABELED USES:

None

APPENDIX

APPENDIX:

Reserved for State specific information. Information includes, but is not limited to, State contract language, Medicaid criteria and other mandated criteria.

State Specific Information

State Marketplace

Illinois (Source: [Illinois General Assembly](#))

“(215 ILCS 200/60) Sec. 60. Length of prior authorization approval. *A prior authorization approval shall be valid for the lesser of 6 months after the date the health care professional or health care provider receives the prior authorization approval or the length of treatment as determined by the patient's health care professional or the renewal of the plan, and the approval period shall be effective regardless of any changes, including any changes in dosage for a prescription drug* prescribed by the health care professional. All dosage increases must be based on established evidentiary standards and nothing in this Section shall prohibit a health insurance issuer from having safety edits in place. This Section shall not apply to the prescription of benzodiazepines or Schedule II narcotic drugs, such as opioids. Except to the extent required by medical exceptions processes for prescription drugs set forth in Section 45.1 of the Managed Care Reform and Patient Rights Act, nothing in this Section shall require a policy to cover any care, treatment, or services for any health condition that the terms of coverage otherwise completely exclude from the policy's covered benefits without regard for whether the care, treatment, or services are medically necessary. (Source: P.A. 102-409, eff. 1-1-22.)”

“(215 ILCS 200/65) Sec. 65. Length of prior authorization approval for *treatment for chronic or long-term conditions*. If a health insurance issuer requires a prior authorization for a recurring health care service or maintenance medication for the treatment of a chronic or long-term condition, *the approval shall remain valid for the lesser of 12 months from the date the health care professional or health care provider receives the prior authorization approval or the length of the treatment as determined by the patient's health care professional*. This Section shall not apply to the prescription of benzodiazepines or Schedule II narcotic drugs, such as opioids. Except to the extent required by medical exceptions processes for prescription drugs set forth in Section 45.1 of the Managed Care Reform and Patient Rights Act, nothing in this Section shall require a policy to cover any care, treatment, or services for any health condition that the terms of coverage otherwise completely exclude from the policy's covered benefits without regard for whether the care, treatment, or services are medically necessary. (Source: P.A. 102-409, eff. 1-1-22.)”

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BACKGROUND AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

BACKGROUND:

None

CONTRAINDICATIONS/EXCLUSIONS/DISCONTINUATION:

All other uses of Iron chelating Agents (Desferal, Exjade, Ferriprox, Jadenu) are considered experimental/investigational and therefore, will follow Molina's Off-Label policy. Contraindications to Desferal (deferioxamine) include: known hypersensitivity to the active substance, patients with severe renal disease or anuria. Contraindications to Ferriprox (deferiprone) include: Hypersensitivity to deferiprone or to any of the excipients in the formulation. Contraindications to Exjade/Jadenu include: an estimated GFR less than 40 mL/min/1.73 m², patients with poor performance status, patients with high-risk MDS, patients with advanced malignancies, patients with platelet counts less than 50 x 10⁹/L, patients with a known hypersensitivity to deferasirox or any component of the requested product, avoid use in patients with severe (Child-Pugh C) hepatic impairment, avoid use with nephrotoxic drugs.

Exclusions/Discontinuation:

Based on evidence and developmental toxicity in animal studies, Ferriprox can cause fetal harm when administered to a pregnant woman. Advise pregnant women and females of reproductive potential of the potential risk to a fetus. Based on genotoxicity findings, advise males with female partners of reproductive potential to use effective contraception during treatment with Ferriprox and for at least 3 months after the last dose.

OTHER SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Jadenu and Exjade have a Black Box Warning for renal failure, hepatic failure, and gastrointestinal hemorrhage.

Ferriprox has a Black Box Warning for agranulocytosis and neutropenia.

For Exjade and Jadenu: For patients with renal impairment (eGFR 40–60 mL/min/1.73 m²), reduce the starting dose by 50%. Exercise caution in pediatric patients with eGFR between 40 and 60 mL/min/1.73 m².

Deferasirox monitoring:

Auditory disturbances (high frequency hearing loss, decreased hearing), and ocular disturbances (lens opacities, cataracts, elevations in intraocular pressure, and retinal disorders) were reported at a frequency of less than 1% with Exjade therapy in the clinical studies. The frequency of auditory adverse reactions was increased among pediatric patients who received Exjade doses greater than 25 mg/kg/day when serum ferritin was less than 1,000 mcg/L. Perform auditory and ophthalmic testing (including slit-lamp examinations and dilated funduscopy) before starting Exjade treatment and thereafter at regular intervals (every 12 months). If disturbances are noted, monitor more frequently. Consider dose reduction or interruption. Measure transaminases [aspartate transaminase (AST) and alanine transaminase (ALT)] and bilirubin in all patients before the initiation of treatment, and every 2 weeks during the first month and at least monthly thereafter. Consider dose modifications or interruption of treatment for severe or persistent elevations. Monitor all patients for changes in eGFR and for renal tubular toxicity weekly during the first month after initiation or modification of therapy and at least monthly thereafter. Dose reduction or interruption may be considered if abnormalities occur in levels of markers of renal tubular function and/or as clinically indicated.

Deferiprone monitoring:

Due to the risk of agranulocytosis, monitor ANC before and during Ferriprox therapy.

Due to the risk of hepatic transaminase elevations, monitor ALT before and monthly during Ferriprox therapy.

Due to the risk of zinc deficiency, monitor zinc levels before and regularly during Ferriprox therapy.

Deferoxamine monitoring:

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Renal toxicity, including increases in serum creatinine (possibly dose-related), acute renal failure and renal tubular disorders has occurred in Desferal-treated patients. Desferal is contraindicated in patients with severe renal disease [see Contraindications (4)]. Monitor serum creatinine to assess for changes in renal function.

High doses of Desferal and concomitant low ferritin levels have also been associated with growth suppression in pediatric patients. After reduction of Desferal dose, growth velocity may partially resume to pre-treatment rates. Monitor growth (weight and height) in pediatric patients treated with Desferal every 3 months.

Cardiac dysfunction has occurred in Desferal-treated patients with severe chronic iron overload following concomitant treatment with high doses of vitamin C (more than 500 mg daily in adults). The cardiac dysfunction was reversible when vitamin C was discontinued. Clinical monitoring of cardiac function is advisable during such combined therapy.

Ocular and auditory toxicities have been reported in Desferal-treated patients. Visual acuity tests, slit-lamp examinations, funduscopy, and audiometry are recommended periodically in patients treated for prolonged periods of time.

CODING/BILLING INFORMATION

CODING DISCLAIMER. Codes listed in this policy are for reference purposes only and may not be all-inclusive or applicable for every state or line of business. Deleted codes and codes which are not effective at the time the service is rendered may not be eligible for reimbursement. Listing of a service or device code in this policy does not guarantee coverage. Coverage is determined by the benefit document. Molina adheres to Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®), a registered trademark of the American Medical Association (AMA). All CPT codes and descriptions are copyrighted by the AMA; this information is included for informational purposes only. Providers and facilities are expected to utilize industry-standard coding practices for all submissions. Molina has the right to reject/deny the claim and recover claim payment(s) if it is determined it is not billed appropriately or not a covered benefit. Molina reserves the right to revise this policy as needed.

HCPCS CODE	DESCRIPTION
J0895	Injection, deferoxamine mesylate, 500mg

AVAILABLE DOSAGE FORMS:

Deferasirox Granules PACK 180MG
Deferasirox Granules PACK 360MG
Deferasirox Granules PACK 90MG
Deferasirox PACK 180MG
Deferasirox PACK 360MG
Deferasirox PACK 90MG
Deferasirox TABS 180MG
Deferasirox TABS 360MG
Deferasirox TABS 90MG
Deferasirox TBSO 125MG
Deferasirox TBSO 250MG
Deferasirox TBSO 500MG
Deferiprone TABS 1000MG
Deferiprone TABS 500MG
Deferoxamine Mesylate SOLR 2GM
Deferoxamine Mesylate SOLR 500MG

Desferal SOLR 500MG
Exjade TBSO 125MG
Exjade TBSO 250MG
Exjade TBSO 500MG
Ferriprox SOLN 100MG/ML
Ferriprox TABS 1000MG
Ferriprox TABS 500MG
Ferriprox Twice-A-Day TABS 1000MG
Jadenu Sprinkle PACK 180MG
Jadenu Sprinkle PACK 360MG
Jadenu Sprinkle PACK 90MG
Jadenu TABS 180MG
Jadenu TABS 360MG
Jadenu TABS 90MG

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4. Jadenu (deferasirox) tablets, for oral use, Jadenu Sprinkle (deferasirox) granules, for oral use [prescribing information]. East Hanover, NJ: Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation; July 2020.
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SUMMARY OF REVIEW/REVISIONS	DATE
REVISION- Notable revisions: Required Medical Information Continuation of Therapy Duration of Approval Quantity Appendix Contraindications/Exclusions/ Discontinuation Other Special Considerations References	Q3 2025

Drug and Biologic Coverage Criteria

REVISION- Notable revisions: Products Affected Continuation of Therapy Duration of Approval Contraindications/Exclusions/ Discontinuation References	Q3 2024
REVISION- Notable revisions: Diagnosis Required Medical Information Continuation of Therapy Duration of Therapy Age Restrictions Quantity Route of Administration FDA-Approved Uses Contraindications/Exclusions/Discontinuation Other Special Considerations Available Dosage Forms References	Q3 2023
REVISION- Notable revisions: Diagnosis Required Medical Information Continuation of Therapy References	Q3 2022
Q2 2022 Established tracking in new format	Historical changes on file

HIGH RISK ALERT