



# KEEPING TABS

## Absolute Pharmacy is the prescription for what ails you.

In each quarterly edition, you'll find the latest news about pharmacy, new medications, technology and more — all through the lens of what is pertinent to the long-term care (LTC) industry.

Absolute Pharmacy has been serving the LTC industry since 1994. We're a part of a dynamic circle of care that consists of rehabilitation, home health care services, hospice care and much more. We have a rich perspective, and we're thrilled to share what we've been learning from industry leaders, our employees and our customers — you!

We are confident you'll find the information useful. If you have a suggestion for a topic you'd like to learn about, let us know at [maryjo.mcelyea@abshealth.com](mailto:maryjo.mcelyea@abshealth.com).

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## Tips to Help Manage Pharmacy Costs and Interpret Your Pharmacy Bill

### Prior Authorizations Requiring Specific Diagnoses

- Lidocaine patch**
- Requires prior authorization and will only be approved with postherpetic neuralgia as the diagnosis.
  - A non-covered cost will be added to facility invoices without above diagnosis.
- Nuedexta**
- Requires prior authorization and will only be approved with pseudobulbar affect as the diagnosis.
  - A non-covered cost will be added to facility invoices without above diagnosis.
- Procrit**
- Requires prior authorization and will only be approved with anemia with chronic kidney disease diagnosis.
  - Lab report with Hemoglobin below 12.

### Be Informed When Considering TPN Patients

- If considering a new resident, TPN orders are approximately \$150 per bag per day.
- Important to determine how long TPN is expected to be necessary.
- Not unusual to be continued longer than Part A stay.
- Most Med D plans do not cover TPN.

05/21/2018	TPN- W/LIPIDS	Qty:1	150.00
	CCID: 05141802	Days Supply: 1	

## House Charges

- Consulting fees, misc. charges, unreconciled starter box and IV pump rental are billed under House Stock.

	HOUSE	
	For: HOUSE STOCK	
/25/2018	CONSULTING Qty:1	\$
	CCID: CONSULTING	
/25/2018	MISC CHARGE NON-TAXABLE Qty:1	\$
	CCID: 00009000381	
	Automated Passport Machine	
/25/2018	MISC CHARGE NON-TAXABLE Qty:1	\$
	CCID: 00009000381	
	Passport Machine Consumables	

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
	HOUSE	
	For: MRN:2017240/ID:	
05/25/2018	IV PUMP (1002) Qty:1	60.00
	CCID: 99999993468	
	IV PUMP RENTAL FOR 5 DAYS	

- A charge for an unreconciled starter box will show as "RX" under the House Stock section.
  - Resident name must be given to pharmacy within 7 business days of audit to bill the resident and not the facility.

	HOUSE	
	For: HOUSE STOCK	
06/12/2018	Rx OTC - NOVOFINE AUTOCOVER 30GX1 Qty:100	
	NDC: 00169185275 Days Supply: 1	
06/17/2018	Rx OTC - NOVOFINE AUTOCOVER 30GX1 Qty:100	
	NDC: 00169185275 Days Supply: 1	
06/26/2018	Rx RX - SODIUM CHL. 2B1322 0.9% Qty:250	
	NDC: 00338004902 Days Supply: 1	
06/26/2018	Rx RX - NovoLOG FLEXPEN 100U/1ML U Qty:3	
	NDC: 00169633910 Days Supply: 1	
06/28/2018	Rx OTC - NOVOFINE AUTOCOVER 30GX1 Qty:100	

## Non-covered Section

- OTC prescriptions, denied prior authorizations, Medicaid copay.
- Note should give reason prescription was not covered or why prior authorization was denied.

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
	NON COVERED (Continued)	
	For: MRN: ID:	
04/21/2018	Rx OTC - ACIDOPHILUS/PECTIN 100MG Qty:60	6.12
	NDC: 11845053301 Days Supply: 60	
	Sales Tax - STARK	\$
04/23/2018	Rx RX - LIDOCAINE PAD 5% Qty:30	
	NDC: 00503189016 Days Supply: 15	
	PRIOR AUTHORIZATION DENIED- DIAGNOSIS NOT FDA APPROVED	

- May show copays that were rebilled claims to Medicaid.

OR

- May show current dates due to the level of care not updated so resident's copays are \$0.
  - Contact the resident's case worker to ensure their level of care is correct.

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
	NON COVERED (Continued)	
	For: MRN: ID:	
4/26/2018	Rx RX - trazODone HCL 50MG TAB Qty:30	Copay: 1.20
	NDC: 50111043303 Days Supply: 30	
	Part D Paid: \$3.82	



## Vaccines for the 2018-2019 Influenza Season

By Courtney Myers, PharmD, BCGP

For the 2018-2019 flu season, recommendations say to administer either the standard flu vaccine or high-dose flu vaccine.<sup>1</sup> When compared to the standard flu vaccine, the high dose contains a higher amount of antigen, which is supposed to give older adults a better immune response. Data from clinical trials comparing the standard flu vaccine with the high dose indicates that the high dose flu vaccine causes a stronger immune response or a higher antibody level. However, further studies are needed to confirm that a stronger immune response leads to greater protection against the flu. Some studies suggest the high dose is more effective in preventing the flu in those 65 years and older and lowers the risk of hospitalizations when compared to the standard dose.<sup>2,3</sup> When looking at safety of the high dose flu vaccine, it is similar to that of the standard flu vaccine, but some adverse effects were more frequently reported with the high dose. The most common adverse events experienced were mild and temporary including injection site redness, headache, malaise and muscle aches.

### New This Season

- The flu vaccine influenza B component as well as influenza A (H3N2) has been updated.
- No intradermal vaccines will be available this year.

### CDC Recommendations for Vaccination in Elderly Adults

- Routine annual influenza vaccination for all persons six months or older who do not have contraindications.
- Persons 65 years or older may receive any age-appropriate vaccine including standard or high-dose, trivalent or quadrivalent, adjuvanted or unadjuvanted, or recombinant vaccines.
- High-dose IIV3 exhibited superior efficacy over comparator standard-dose IIV3 in a large randomized trial. This may provide better protection than standard dose IIV3 for this age group.
- Vaccinations should not be delayed to find a particular product if an appropriate one is available.

- Inactivated flu vaccines may be administered concurrently or sequentially with other inactivated or live vaccines at separate anatomic sites.
- Live flu vaccines may be administered simultaneously with other live vaccines at different anatomical sites. However, if not given simultaneously, four weeks or more should pass.

### Flu Vaccinations Available at Absolute Pharmacy

- Flucelvax Quadrivalent Vaccine – grown in cell culture
- Fluzone High-Dose – grown in egg culture
- Other vaccines may be made available upon request

If there are any other questions regarding flu vaccines this season, contact your pharmacist for more information.

#### References:

- 1) "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention." CDC. 26 Apr. 2017, [www.cdc.gov/](http://www.cdc.gov/).
- 2) DiazGranados CA, Dunning AJ, Kimmel M. et al. Efficacy of high-dose versus standard-dose influenza vaccine in older adults. *N Engl J Med*. 2014;371:635-45. DOI:10.1056/NEJMoa1315727.
- 3) Gravenstein S, Davidson HE, Taljaard M, et al. Comparative effectiveness of high-dose versus standard-dose influenza vaccination on numbers of US nursing home residents admitted to hospital: a cluster-randomized trial. *The Lancet*. 2017; Vol5, Issue 9: 738-746. DOI: 10.1016/S2213-2600(17)30235-7



# High Cost Medications

## VERY EXPENSIVE

IVS	INJECTIONS	ANTIPSYCHOTICS	TOPICALS	MISCELLANEOUS	ANTIBIOTICS
Azactam IV	Aranesp inj	Abilify	Clindamycin gel	Adcirca tabs	Doxycycline tabs
Cubicin IV	Enoxaparin inj	Latuda tabs	Clonidine patch	Brilinta tabs	Zyvox tabs
Invanz IV	Fondaparinux inj	Seroquel XR	Desoximethasone cream	Canasa supps	
Oxacillin IV	Forteo inj	Ziprasidone	Exelon patch	Edecrin tabs	
Teflaro IV	Glucagon inj		Kenalog spray	Entacapone tabs	
Tygacil IV	Lantus inj		Lidocaine patches	Itraconazole caps	
	Levemir inj		Metronidazole gel	Lialda tabs	
	Procrit inj		Naftin cream	Modafanil tabs	
			Santyl oint	Nuedexta caps	
			Zovirax oint	Xifaxan tabs	

## EXPENSIVE IN 30-DAY SUPPLIES

PAIN MEDICATIONS	OPHTHALMICS	RESPIRATORY MEDICATION	MISCELLANEOUS	MISCELLANEOUS	MISCELLANEOUS
Fentanyl patch	Betoptic eye drops	Advair	Acetazolamide tabs	Klorcon powder	Renagel tabs
Nucynta tabs	Brimonidine eye drops	Brovana	Aggrenox caps	Lodosyn tabs	Sensipar
Oxycontin tabs	Prednisolone eye drops	Budesonide	Amantadine tabs	Lunesta tabs	Sucrafate U-D
		Combivent	Amitiza caps	Lyrica caps	Temazepam caps
		Dulera	Baclofen tabs	Myrbetriq ER tabs	Tradjenta tabs
		Perforomist	Calcium Acetate caps	Namenda tabs	Trospium tab
		Spiriva	Carbamazepine ER tabs	Neupro disc	Ursodiol tabs
		Tudorza	Colcrys tabs	Niacin ER tabs	Vimpat tabs
			Donepezil 23mg tabs	Pacerone tabs	Xarelto tabs
			Dronabinol caps	Patricalcitol	
			Duloxetine/Cymbalta	Pradaxa caps	
			Eliquis tabs	Promethagan supps	
			Fosrenal	Ranexa tabs	

## BE AWARE OF THESE HIGH COST MEDICATIONS

TYIVS ANTIBIOTICS	INJECTIONS	RENAL TX	ANTIPSYCHOTICS	RESPIRATORY	MISCELLANEOUS
Azactam IV	Aranesp inj	Fosrenal	Nuplazid	Brovana	Adcirca tabs
Cefpodoximine tabs	Copaxone inj	Paricalcitol	Latuda tabs	Budesonide	Brimonidine eye drops
Cubicin IV	Enbrel inj	Renagel tabs	Seroquel XR (high dose)	Perforomist	Donepezil 23 mg tab
Invanz IV	Enoxaparin inj	Sensipar	Fanapt	Tudorza	Duloxetine caps (high dose)
Meropenem IV	Fondaparinux inj				Edecrin tabs
Mycamine IV	Forteo inj				Entacapone tabs
Nitrofurantoin susp (not caps)	Procrit inj				Exelon patch
Oxacillin IV					Gleevec
Teflaro IV					Itraconazole caps
TPNs					Lialda tabs
Tygacil IV					Lidocaine patches
Zyvox tabs					Lodosyn tabs
					Modafanil tabs
					Neoral
					Neupro disc
					Niacin ER tabs
					Nucynta tabs
					Nuedexta caps
					Nuvigil tabs
					Oxycontin tab (high dose)
					Sulcralfate UD susp
					Xifaxan tabs

Cost may depend on strength and quantity. This is not an all-inclusive list.

## New Medication Proven to Improve Blood Sugar Control Without Insulin

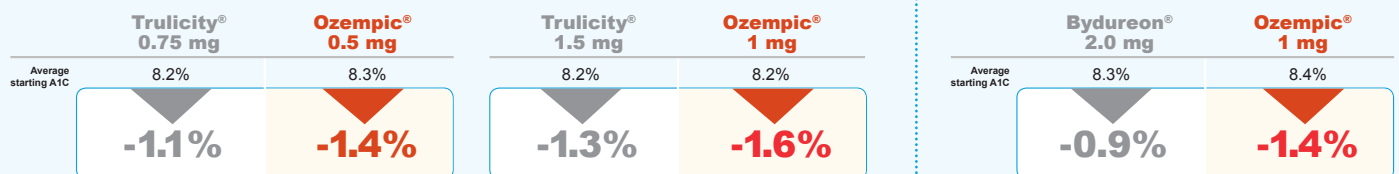
By Amy Ketler, PharmD Candidate, Northeast Ohio Medical University

On December 5, 2017, the FDA approved a new medication called semaglutide (Ozempic) that is indicated for use in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus. Ozempic is a non-insulin injectable medication that has been proven to significantly improve blood sugar control. To have the most effect, this medication is recommended to be used in combination with diet and exercise.

Ozempic is a selective glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonist. It works by assisting the body in its ability to control blood sugar levels and starts working when they rise. In response, the medication increases the amount of insulin released from the pancreas. Ozempic also slows the rate that food leaves the stomach, helping to lower the amount of sugar released from the liver. The most common side effects seen with this medication are increased amylase and lipase,

nausea, diarrhea, vomiting and abdominal pain. Ozempic should not be used if the patient or family member has had medullary thyroid cancer or an endocrine system condition called multiple endocrine neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN2).

Research comparing Ozempic to other medications in the same pharmaceutical category showed the medication had a greater average reduction of HbA1c vs. Trulicity after 40 weeks. It also had a greater average reduction vs. Bydureon after 56 weeks. (See figures below.) Some geriatric patients may be more sensitive to the medication. However, there were no differences in safety or efficacy between younger and older adults found in these studies. This medication does not require a dose adjustment for impaired renal function.



### Important information to know about Ozempic:

- **Dosing:** The beginning dose is 0.25 mg weekly for the first four weeks, then increased to 0.5 mg weekly at week five. If additional blood sugar control is still needed after at least four weeks on the 0.5 mg dose, health care providers may increase the dose to 1 mg weekly. There is a separate pen for this dose and will require a new prescription.
- **Storage:** Prior to first use, Ozempic should be stored under refrigeration. After first use, it may be stored under refrigeration or at room temperature for up to 56 days (discard pen after 56 days).
- **Administration:** Ozempic should be injected under the skin of the abdomen, thigh, or upper arm at any time on the same day each week, with or without food. Change the pen needle and injection site with each injection. Do not share the Ozempic pen with other people, even if the needle has been changed.

- Ozempic may cause serious side effects like possible thyroid tumors, including cancer. Patients should tell their health care provider if they get a lump or swelling in the neck, hoarseness, trouble swallowing or shortness of breath.
- Ozempic is not a substitute for insulin and is not appropriate for use in patients with type 1 diabetes.

Overall, studies have found this new medication to be safe and effective in younger (18 and older) and older patients. Ozempic has shown to reduce average HbA1c levels and help with glycemic control. Although this medication is not recommended as the first choice medication for treating type 2 diabetes, it is only injected once weekly. This dosing schedule makes it an additional medication option for a patient looking to reduce the amount of daily injections. It also helps increase quality of life in patients living with type 2 diabetes.





## Put a Face to a Name: Deanna Bilinovich

**Q:** How long have you worked for Absolute Pharmacy?

**A:** 3½ years

**Q:** What do you do for Absolute Pharmacy?

**A:** I am an operations/consultant pharmacist

**Q:** What do you absolutely love about working for Absolute Pharmacy?

**A:** The people I work with. They make work fun! I also really love what I do!

**Q:** What chore do you absolutely hate doing the most?

**A:** Cooking

**Q:** What do you enjoy doing the most?

**A:** Relaxing in my pool

**Q:** What did you want to be when you grew up as a child?

**A:** A veterinarian

**Q:** If you could take a vacation anywhere in the world, where would it be?

**A:** Italy or Spain. Maybe both if I am lucky!

## ITEMS THAT MAY NOT BE RETURNED TO ABSOLUTE PHARMACY

- Refrigerated items
- Controlled substances
- Special order items
- Topicals or liquids that have been opened
- Mixed IV medications
- Multi-dose packaging (cards or pouches)
- Partial punch cards for third-party payers (insurance)
- Partial tablets (1/2 tabs, 1/4 tabs, etc.)
- Anything filled more than 60 days ago

Absolute Pharmacy always strives for continued customer satisfaction. The items listed above may not be returned for credit. We maintain chain of custody (documentation that records the sequence of custody) for controlled medications. Absolute Pharmacy has recently seen an increase in controlled medications being returned to the pharmacy with no chain of custody. Controls are non-returnable per DEA Regulations. If you feel there are circumstances warranting a return, please contact your account manager, the customer service department or a pharmacist to discuss. Please do not return controlled substances without authorization.



# ABSOLUTE INSIGHTS

## Give Us 5 Minutes



### Please Take Our Short Survey

How are we doing? It takes less than five minutes. We value your input and feedback and are always looking for ways we can improve. Please take this brief survey and we will use the information to continue providing the services you like and identify areas for improvement. We want to hear from you!

[www.abshealth.com/abpsurvey](http://www.abshealth.com/abpsurvey)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### FALL CONFERENCE

October 4-5  
Columbus, OH

### LEADINGAGE NATIONAL

October 28  
Philadelphia, PA

### OALA FALL CONFERENCE

October 29  
Columbus, OH

### VOICE ACCORD

November 13-14  
Mars, PA

