

## Clinical Policy: Epoprostenol (Flolan, Veletri)

Reference Number: LA.PHAR.192

Effective Date: 09.08.21

Last Review Date: 04.29.24

Line of Business: Medicaid

[Coding Implications](#)

[Revision Log](#)

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

**\*\*Please note: This policy is for medical benefit\*\***

### Description

Epoprostenol (Flolan<sup>®</sup>, Veletri<sup>®</sup>) is a prostacyclin.

### FDA Approved Indication(s)

Flolan and Veletri are indicated for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) (World Health Organization [WHO] Group 1) to improve exercise capacity.

Studies establishing effectiveness included predominantly patients with New York Heart Association (NYHA) Functional Class III-IV symptoms and etiologies of idiopathic or heritable PAH or PAH associated with connective tissue diseases.

### 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 Louisiana Healthcare Connections that epoprostenol is **necessary** when the following criteria are met:

#### I. Initial Approval Criteria

##### A. Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of PAH;
2. Prescribed by or in consultation with a cardiologist or pulmonologist;
3. Failure of a calcium channel blocker (*see Appendix B*), unless member meets one of the following (a or b):
  - a. Inadequate response or contraindication to acute vasodilator testing;
  - b. Contraindication or clinically significant adverse effects to calcium channel blockers are experienced;
4. If request is for brand Flolan or brand Veletri, member must use generic epoprostenol sodium, unless contraindicated or clinically significant adverse effects are experienced;
5. Provider must submit treatment plan detailing pump rate, dose and quantity (in mL).

**Approval duration:** 6 months

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

1. If this drug has recently (within the last 6 months) undergone a label change (e.g., newly approved indication, age expansion, new dosing regimen) that is not yet reflected in this policy, refer to LA.PMN.255
2. If the requested use (e.g., diagnosis, age, dosing regimen) is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized) AND criterion 1 above does not apply, refer to the off-label use policy LA.PMN.53

**II. Continued Therapy**

**A. Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension** (must meet all):

1. Currently receiving medication via Louisiana Healthcare Connections benefit or member has previously met initial approval criteria;
2. Member is responding positively to therapy;
3. If request is for brand Flolan or brand Veletri, member must use generic epoprostenol sodium, unless contraindicated or clinically significant adverse effects are experienced;
4. Provider must submit treatment plan detailing pump rate, dose and quantity (in mL).

**Approval duration:** 12 months

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

1. If this drug has recently (within the last 6 months) undergone a label change (e.g., newly approved indication, age expansion, new dosing regimen) that is not yet reflected in this policy, refer to LA.PMN.255
2. If the requested use (e.g., diagnosis, age, dosing regimen) is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized) AND criterion 1 above does not apply, refer to the off-label use policy LA.PMN.53

**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 policy LA.PMN.53.

**IV. Appendices/General Information**

*Appendix A: Abbreviation/Acronym Key*

CTEPH: chronic thromboembolic  
pulmonary hypertension

FC: functional class

FDA: Food and Drug Administration

NYHA: New York Heart Association

PA: physical activity

PAH: pulmonary arterial hypertension

PH: pulmonary hypertension

WHO: World Health Organization

*Appendix B: Therapeutic Alternatives*

*This table provides a listing of preferred alternative therapy recommended in the approval criteria. The drugs listed here may require prior authorization.*

Drug Name	Dosing Regimen	Dose Limit/ Maximum Dose
nifedipine (Adalat <sup>®</sup> CC, Procardia XL <sup>®</sup> )	60 mg PO QD; may increase to 120 to 240 mg/day	240 mg/day
diltiazem (Dilacor XR <sup>®</sup> , Dilt-XR <sup>®</sup> , Cardizem <sup>®</sup> CD, Cartia XT <sup>®</sup> , Tiazac <sup>®</sup> , Taztia XT <sup>®</sup> , Cardizem <sup>®</sup> LA, Matzim <sup>®</sup> LA)	720 to 960 mg PO QD	960 mg/day
amlodipine (Norvasc <sup>®</sup> )	20 to 30 mg PO QD	30 mg/day

*Therapeutic alternatives are listed as Brand name<sup>®</sup> (generic) when the drug is available by brand name only and generic (Brand name<sup>®</sup>) when the drug is available by both brand and generic.*

*Appendix C: Contraindications/Boxed Warnings*

- Contraindication(s):
  - Congestive heart failure due to severe left ventricular systolic dysfunction
  - Pulmonary edema (Veletri only)
  - Hypersensitivity to the drug or to structurally related compounds
- Boxed warning(s): none reported

*Appendix D: Pulmonary Hypertension: WHO Classification*

- Group 1: PAH
- Group 2: PH due to left heart disease
- Group 3: PH due to lung disease and/or hypoxemia
- Group 4: CTEPH
- Group 5: PH due to unclear multifactorial mechanisms

*Appendix E: Pulmonary Hypertension: WHO/NYHA Functional Classes (FC)*

Treatment Approach*	FC	Status at Rest	Tolerance of Physical Activity (PA)	PA Limitations	Heart Failure
Monitoring for progression of PH and treatment of co-existing conditions	I	Comfortable at rest	No limitation	Ordinary PA does not cause undue dyspnea or fatigue, chest pain, or near syncope.	
Advanced treatment of PH with PH-targeted therapy - see Appendix F**	II	Comfortable at rest	Slight limitation	Ordinary PA causes undue dyspnea or fatigue, chest pain, or near syncope.	
	III	Comfortable at rest	Marked limitation	Less than ordinary PA causes undue dyspnea or fatigue, chest pain, or near syncope.	

Treatment Approach*	FC	Status at Rest	Tolerance of Physical Activity (PA)	PA Limitations	Heart Failure
	IV	Dyspnea or fatigue may be present at rest	Inability to carry out any PA without symptoms	Discomfort is increased by any PA.	Signs of right heart failure

\*PH supportive measures may include diuretics, oxygen therapy, anticoagulation, digoxin, exercise, pneumococcal vaccination. \*\*Advanced treatment options also include calcium channel blockers.

*Appendix F: Pulmonary Hypertension: Targeted Therapies*

Mechanism of Action	Drug Class	Drug Subclass	Drug	Brand/Generic Formulations	
Reduction of pulmonary arterial pressure through vasodilation	Prostacyclin* pathway agonist  <i>*Member of the prostanoid class of fatty acid derivatives.</i>	Prostacyclin	Epoprostenol	Velettri (IV) Flolan (IV) Flolan generic (IV)	
		Synthetic prostacyclin analog	Treprostinil	Orenitram (oral tablet) Remodulin (IV) Tyvaso (inhalation)	
			Iloprost	Ventavis (inhalation)	
	Endothelin receptor antagonist (ETRA)	Non-prostanoid prostacyclin receptor (IP receptor) agonist	Selexipag	Uptravi (oral tablet)	
			Selective receptor antagonist	Ambrisentan	Letairis (oral tablet)
				Nonselective dual action receptor antagonist	Bosentan
	Nitric oxide-cyclic guanosine monophosphate enhancer	Phosphodiesterase type 5 (PDE5) inhibitor	Sildenafil		Revatio (IV, oral tablet, oral suspension)
			Tadalafil	Adcirca (oral tablet)	
		Guanylate cyclase stimulant (sGC)	Riociguat	Adempas (oral tablet)	

**V. Dosage and Administration**

Drug Name	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
Epoprostenol (Flolan)	2 ng/kg/min IV, increased by 1-2 ng/kg/min at intervals of at least 15 minutes	Based on clinical response

Drug Name	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
Epoprostenol (Veletri)	2 ng/kg/min IV, increased by 2 ng/kg/min every 15 minutes or longer	Based on clinical response

**VI. Product Availability**

Drug Name	Availability
Epoprostenol (Flolan)	Vial with powder for reconstitution: 0.5 mg, 1.5 mg
Epoprostenol (Veletri)	Vial with powder for reconstitution: 0.5 mg, 1.5 mg

**VII. References**

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**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
J1325	Injection, poprostenol, 0.5 mg

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	LDH Approval Date
Converted corporate to local policy.	03.21	09.08.21
Revised medical justification language to “must use” language for generic redirection; added generic redirection to continued therapy; references reviewed and updated.	09.22	09.15.22
Template changes applied to other diagnoses/indications and continued therapy section. References reviewed and updated. Added verbiage this policy is only for medical benefit.	06.02.23	10.24.23
Annual review; removed commercially unavailable branded products from Appendix B; clarified Veletri product availability description to describe a “powder for reconstitution” per PI; references reviewed and updated.	04.29.24	

**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. LHCC 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.

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