



June 2016

Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program Update

Informing First Nations and Inuit clients, as well as their representative organizations, about their coverage and NIHB policy changes

What's Inside

<i>Change in the Listing Status of Bisphosphonates</i>	1
<i>New Treatments Initiated by Pharmacists</i>	1
<i>Coverage for Naloxone</i>	2
<i>Reminder – Change in Coverage of Medications to Treat Constipation</i>	2
<i>NIHB Welcomes Dental Hygienists as Independent Service Providers</i>	3

Pharmacy Benefit Information

Change in the Listing Status of Bisphosphonates

Bisphosphonates are drugs that help strengthen bones, and are used in the treatment and prevention of osteoporosis and Paget disease. On March 10, 2016, oral bisphosphonate medications covered by the NIHB Program became open benefits. Claims for open benefits are processed automatically and do not require prior approval.

New Treatments Initiated by Pharmacists

Effective June 1, 2016, NIHB expanded options for pharmacists to initiate treatments for NIHB clients. These will allow easier access to many eligible products and medications. NIHB will accept prescriptions or written recommendations from pharmacists for claims that do not require prior approval, for the following types of benefits:

- Prenatal vitamins
- Medications for the prevention and treatment of nausea and vomiting in pregnancy
- Emergency contraception (the ‘morning after pill’)
- Vaginal yeast infection treatments
- Smoking cessation aids
- Lice treatments
- Allergy medications
- Constipation treatments
- Naloxone

Please remember that each province and territory has different regulations for health care providers, so you should talk to your local pharmacist to find out whether they can recommend or prescribe these treatments for you.

Coverage for Naloxone

Naloxone is an injectable medication that can reverse the effects of an overdose from opioid drugs (e.g. heroin, morphine, fentanyl). To improve access to this life-saving medication, NIHB has added naloxone as an open benefit on the Drug Benefit List.

If you or someone close to you may be at risk of an opioid overdose, it is recommended that you have a naloxone kit on hand, and be trained to use it. Public health programs in some provinces and territories now provide naloxone kits and training, so before claiming it through NIHB, you should check with your pharmacist to see if it is available through local health services.

Reminder - Change in Coverage of Medications to Treat Constipation

Docusate is a stool softener that may be prescribed for constipation. However, recent medical studies have found that docusate is not an effective medication to prevent or relieve constipation. Effective September 13, 2016, docusate products will not be covered by NIHB.

I'm taking stool softeners – now what do I do?

There are many different ways to treat constipation. Changes to your diet and how much physical activity you are getting may help, but sometimes medication is needed.

NIHB covers many other medications for constipation that are effective. Some of these work by making your stool bulkier and easier to pass. Others work by stimulating your bowels to move. Some draw water into your bowel making it easier to pass stools. Still others lubricate your bowel so that stool moves more easily through them. These medications come in many different forms: pills, liquids, powders, suppositories (that are inserted into the rectum), and enemas (fluid inserted through the rectum).

NIHB will pay for alternate treatments when prescribed or recommended by your pharmacist, nurse practitioner, physician, or other prescriber. Together with your healthcare provider, you can choose a treatment covered by NIHB that is right for you.

Where can I find more information?

For more information about coverage of other medications for constipation, consult the NIHB Drug Benefit List [www.health.gc.ca/dbl]. You can review the evidence on stool softeners and other treatments for constipation by visiting the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) web page [www.cadth.ca/search?keywords=stool+softeners].

Dental Benefit Information

NIHB Welcomes Dental Hygienists as Independent Service Providers

Effective June 1st, 2016, dental hygienists are able to submit claims to the Program as independent service providers, within their professional scope of practice. This applies in all regions except Quebec, Prince Edward Island, and the Territories, where professional regulations do not currently allow dental hygienists to practice independently.

NIHB welcomes dental hygienists to the Program, and is pleased to notify clients of this change that increases access to preventive oral health care for First Nations and Inuit.

Client Inquiries - General

Alberta	1-780-495-3302 (Main reception) Toll-free: 1-800-232-7301
Atlantic	1-902-426-2656 Toll-free: 1-800-565-3294
British Columbia	First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) Toll free: 1-800-317-7878
Manitoba	Toll-free: 1-800-665-8507
Northwest Territories/Nunavut	Toll-free: 1-888-332-9222
Ontario	Toll-free: 1-800-640-0642
Quebec	1-514-283-1575 Toll-free: 1-877-483-1575
Saskatchewan	Toll free: 1-866-885-3933
Yukon	Toll-free: 1-866-362-6717

Client Inquiries – Dental and Orthodontic Services

NIHB Dental Predetermination Centre	Toll-Free: 1-855-618-6291 (Dental Services)
	Toll-Free: 1-866-227-0943 (Orthodontic Services)