High Anticholinergic Burden (ACB) Score

Superior HealthPlan retrospectively reviews Medicaid (STAR+PLUS) members' pharmacy claims for potential drug problems. To provide the best quality of care to Superior members, providers should be aware of the risks of very high Anticholinergic Burden (ACB) scores.

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) recognized the risks of anticholinergic and other potentially inappropriate medications and created the HEDIS® measure Use of High-Risk Medications in the Elderly (DAE) based upon the Beers Criteria developed by the American Geriatrics Society.

In addition, a recent study in *JAMA Internal Medicine,* "Anticholinergic Drug Exposure and the Risk of Dementia," found a potential correlation between persistent elevated ACB and increased dementia (especially vascular) risk, beginning as early as 55 years of age. The correlation is strongest with the following classes of medications:

- **Antidepressants**
- **Antipsychotics**
- **Anticonvulsants**

Any ACB scale score of 3 or higher greatly increases the risk for central anticholinergic blocking and therefore confusion, disorientation, arrhythmias, hallucinations, seizures, coma and even death. Efforts should be made to reduce persistent, elevated ACB when possible. Please review the next page for therapeutic alternatives.

For more information, please visit Superior's Behavioral Health webpage: www.SuperiorHealthPlan.com/providers/resources/behavioral-health.html.

For any questions, please contact the Superior Pharmacy Department at 1-800-218-7453, ext. 22080.

High Anticholinergic Burden Medications

Therapeutic Alternatives

Refer to the table below for therapeutic alternatives to lower overall ACB.

Medicine Group	Minimal ACB	Mild ACB = 1	Moderate ACB = 2	Severe ACB = 3
Antihistamines	Fexofenadine	Desloratadine Levocetirizine	Cetirizine Loratadine	Chlorpheniramine Clemastine Cyproheptadine Diphenhydramine Doxylamine
Anticonvulsants/ Mood Stabilizers	Divalproex/Valproate Lamotrigine Lithium		Carbamazepine Oxcarbazepine	
Antianxiety	Buspirone Clonazepam	Alprazolam Chlorazepate Diazepam		Hydroxyzine
Antidepressants	Duloxetine	Bupropion Fluvoxamine Mirtazepine Trazodone Venlafaxine	Clomipramine Desipramine Sertraline	Amitriptyline Doxepin Imipramine Nortriptyline Paroxetine Trimipramine
Antiparkinson Agents		Entacapone Levodopa/Carbidopa Pramipexole Selegeline	Amantadine Pimozide	Benztropine Procyclidine Trihexyphenidyl
Antipsychotics		Aripiprazole Asenapine Haloperidol Iloperidone Paliperidone Quetiapine Risperidone Ziprasidone	Loxapine Prochlorperazine	Chlorpromazine Clozapine Fluphenazine Olanzapine Perphenazine Thioridazine
Cardiac Agents	Spironolactone Hydrochlorothiazide Carvedilol Lisinopril Losartan Amlodipine	Atenolol Captopril Chlorthalidone Digoxin Furosemide Hydralazine Isosorbide Dinitrate Metoprolol Nifedipine Timolol Triamterene		
GI Agents	PPIs	Metoclopramide Ranitidine	Cimetidine Loperamide Prochlorperazine	Dicyclomine Hyoscyamine Promethazine Scopolamine
Muscle Pain	Acetaminophen Metaxalone NSAIDs		Baclofen Cyclobenzaprine	Methocarbamol Orphenadrine Tizanidine
Urinary Incontinence	Mirabegron			Fesoteradine Oxybutynin Solifenacine Tolterodine Trospium

Source: acbcalc.com