



COVID-19 Antigen Over-the-Counter Test Coverage Updates, Effective November 1, 2023

October 1, 2023

On February 9, 2023, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued [Fact Sheet: COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Transition Roadmap](#) which stated that the federal Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) public health emergency (PHE) ended on May 11, 2023.

Over-the-Counter (OTC) Emergency Use of Authorization (EUA) U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-authorized, self-administered COVID-19 antigen test kits will remain a Medi-Cal Rx covered pharmacy benefit, subject to utilization controls and board of pharmacy prescription billing requirements. No changes will occur to the benefit status until October 1, 2024, prior to which the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) will review the benefit to determine appropriate continuation and coverage criteria. Continue to refer to the Medi-Cal Rx [Bulletins & News](#) page for updated information.

The following criteria apply for coverage of these tests as a Medi-Cal Rx pharmacy benefit:

- Restricted for the diagnostic condition of suspected COVID-19 (Code I Restriction); and,
- Restricted to up to 8 tests total (4 kits with 2 tests per kit), currently on the [List of Covered Emergency Use of Authorization \(EUA\) COVID-19 Antigen Tests](#), per 30 days, per member, where only 1-test-per-kit, or 2-tests-per-kit billing codes (11-digit NDC-like number) are reimbursable, and kits cannot be broken and must be dispensed whole; and,
- No refills allowed. The member would need to obtain a new prescription for each dispensing; and,
- Dispensed from a Medi-Cal Rx pharmacy provider, written (or electronic equivalent) on a prescription signed by a licensed prescriber or a pharmacist; and,

- **(New, effective November 1, 2023)** Pharmacy providers are required to have one-on-one documented contact (in-person, telehealth, or phone) with the member or caregiver prior to dispensing COVID-19 OTC EUA tests; and,
- **(New, effective November 1, 2023)** The member/caregiver must request the pharmacy provider dispense the COVID-19 OTC EUA tests; autofill is not permitted. Items dispensed without a valid, documented request will be denied as not reasonable or necessary and are subject to post-adjudication audit review by DHCS.

Note: Prior authorization (PA) requests for quantities outside the allowed amounts will be denied unless ordered or administered by a pharmacy provider following an individualized clinical assessment with appropriate medical necessity demonstrated.

To receive a test or test kit, the member must be eligible for Medi-Cal on the date of service (DOS). The *COVID-19 Vaccines, OTC Antigen Test Kits, and Therapeutics: Coverage and Reimbursements* section of the [Medi-Cal Rx Provider Manual](#) will be updated at a later time on the [Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal](#) with additional coverage and reimbursement information.

For the most current information regarding Medi-Cal's COVID-19 response, see the [COVID-19 Medi-Cal Response](#) page on the Medi-Cal Providers website. For questions concerning the discontinuation of specific COVID-19 benefits, email DHCS at COVID19Apps@dhcs.ca.gov.

Contact Information

You can call the Medi-Cal Rx Customer Service Center (CSC) at 1-800-977-2273, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.

For other questions, email Medi-Cal Rx Education & Outreach at MediCalRxEducationOutreach@magellanhealth.com.