



# STEP THERAPY

MAKING STRIDES IN MANAGING YOUR MEDICATION

If you are currently taking prescription medications, then Step Therapy is the preferred way to help better manage your health, your drug costs and your overall treatment effectiveness. Step Therapy is a process designed to help every plan member, not a program you pay for or elect upfront. It's one of the many ways that Memorial Hermann is helping to keep your health costs low while continuing to deliver high-quality care.

The main goal of Step Therapy is to promote safer, more cost-effective treatment by encouraging a "step" approach in evaluating prescription drug use. To receive the maximum plan benefit, you may first need to try a proven, cost-effective option before engaging in a newer treatment that may be higher-cost and higher-risk.

### **Newer doesn't always mean better.**

Just because a medication is the latest on the market doesn't always mean it's the greatest option for you. In many instances a high-cost brand name drug may have a safer, less expensive generic option that will not only save you money, but should also be more effective in addressing your particular needs.

### **A step-by-step approach to better health.**

The first step in Step Therapy is to establish a prescription history with a first-line drug. First-line medications are defined as being both cost-effective and highly appropriate for treating certain conditions.

A second-line drug is often less-preferred and more expensive. Because second-line medications are generally new to the market, the full spectrum of side effects may not be fully understood. While second-line drugs may be riskier and more expensive, if your doctor determines that a first-line drug is not right for you, then your prescription drug benefit will cover second-line drugs (after certain conditions are met).

## LET'S GET MOVING: PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

Prior Authorization is required for certain high-cost, high-risk drugs, including those with the greatest potential for misuse. Before medications on the Prior Authorization list can be covered under your plan, your doctor will need to give approval.

Drugs such as human growth hormone and other medications with a high potential for abuse or misuse will be included in this list. Keep in mind that the Prior Authorization list can change, and new drugs are added and removed regularly.

If you are already taking a medication that becomes part of the Prior Authorization list, your doctor must submit a Prior Authorization Request for coverage of that drug to continue.

Physicians may request Prior Authorization and approval on your behalf by calling **(800) 294-5979** or by sending a fax to **(888) 836-0730**.



### Questions? Call us.

If you have questions about Step Therapy or Prior Authorization, or if you want determine if a particular drug is included in one of these programs, please call the Pharmacy Program number on the back of your Memorial Hermann Health Insurance Co ID card.

Always remember that decisions about medical treatment should be made by you and your doctor. Once those decisions are made, Step Therapy and Prior Authorization can help to ensure the best possible treatment at the best possible price.

**And that's a step in the right direction for everyone.**

