



**of Tennessee**

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801 Pine Street  
Chattanooga, TN 37402

bcbst.com

Dear Member,

To help you save money on your prescription drug costs, beginning April 1, 2008, your pharmacy benefit plan will include a special type of prior authorization called Step Therapy for certain drugs that treat stomach problems.

**Step Therapy helps you save money**

Step Therapy requires you to try a proven, less expensive generic or over-the-counter drug before using a more expensive, brand-name medication.

**Step Therapy for Proton Pump Inhibitors**

Proton pump inhibitors or PPIs, like Prilosec, Nexium and Protonix, are a type of drug used to treat heartburn and other problems caused by stomach acid. Because PPIs are widely used, there are many generic and over-the-counter alternatives available.

**Starting April 1, 2008, if your doctor writes you a new prescription for a PPI drug, you will be required to try Prilosec OTC or omeprazole (available over the counter), or a generic prescription drug, such as omeprazole (Prilosec) or pantoprazole (Protonix), before you try a more expensive brand-name drug.**

**If you are currently taking a PPI or have filled a prescription for a PPI in the past six months, you will not be required to switch medications.** You can continue to take the brand-name PPI without having to try a generic or over-the-counter alternative first.

**Prilosec OTC covered at 100 percent**

Under your pharmacy benefit plan, the generic prescription drugs omeprazole (Prilosec) and pantoprazole (Protonix), and the over-the-counter drug Prilosec OTC will be covered at 100 percent. You won't have to pay anything for these medications.

To receive Prilosec OTC at no cost, you must have a prescription for the medication and have the pharmacist process the claim through their system. Prilosec OTC is a 20mg. pill. If you need to take 40mg per day, make sure that is on the prescription and pick up twice the amount. Just in case, let the pharmacist know this is covered under your pharmacy benefit plan.

If you do not have a prescription for Prilosec OTC and do not have the pharmacist process the claim through their system, you will be responsible for the full cost of the medication.

**Talk with your doctor about options**

Because so many popular prescription drugs have generic and over-the-counter alternatives, talk with your doctor or pharmacist about your choices and this change in your pharmacy benefit plan. Making wise choices about the medications you take can help you get the most out of your benefits – and save money.

If you have questions about Step Therapy or your pharmacy benefits, call Customer Service at the phone number on your BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee member ID card.

Best of health,  
BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee