

## UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT MEDICAL POLICY

**POLICY:** Antiemetics – Palonosetron Intravenous Products Utilization Management Medical Policy

- Palonosetron intravenous infusion (generic only)
- Posfrea™ (palonosetron intravenous infusion – Avyxa)

**REVIEW DATE:** 05/13/2026

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### OVERVIEW

Palonosetron intravenous (IV) [formerly Aloxi®, Posfrea], a serotonin-3 (5-HT<sub>3</sub>) receptor antagonist, is indicated for the **prevention** of the following:<sup>1,2</sup>

- **Acute and delayed nausea and vomiting** associated with initial and repeat courses of moderately emetogenic cancer chemotherapy in adults.
- **Acute nausea and vomiting** associated with initial and repeat courses of highly emetogenic cancer chemotherapy in adults.
- **Acute nausea and vomiting** associated with initial and repeat courses of emetogenic cancer chemotherapy, including highly emetogenic cancer chemotherapy, in pediatric patients 1 month to < 17 years of age.
- **Postoperative nausea and vomiting (PONV)** for up to 24 hours following surgery in adults. Efficacy beyond 24 hours has not been demonstrated.

### Disease Overview

Palonosetron has strong affinity for the 5-HT<sub>3</sub> receptor and little or no affinity for other receptors.<sup>1</sup> Chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting (CINV) is thought to be mediated by release of serotonin from the small intestine, which then activates 5-HT<sub>3</sub> receptors located on vagal afferent nerves in the gastrointestinal tract and chemoreceptor trigger zone of the brain. PONV is influenced by multiple patient, surgical, and anesthesia related factors leading to release of serotonin in the central nervous system and periphery. By blocking the 5-HT<sub>3</sub> receptor, palonosetron inhibits the serotonin-stimulated emetic response.

### Guidelines

The 5-HT<sub>3</sub> receptor antagonists feature prominently in National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) antiemesis guidelines for CINV. In these guidelines (version 1.2026 – April 3, 2026), palonosetron is supported as part of a combination regimen for both acute and delayed emesis CINV prevention.<sup>3</sup> Palonosetron is typically used as part of combination antiemetic regimens based on chemotherapy emetogenic risk. American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) antiemetic guidelines (2020) provide similar recommendations for the prevention of CINV.<sup>4</sup> The American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology (ASPHO) guidelines for the prevention of acute and delayed CINV (2022) recommend palonosetron treatment strategies in selected pediatric patients requiring CINV prevention.<sup>5</sup>

### Dosing

NCCN antiemesis guidelines (version 1.2026 – April 3, 2026) indicate repeat dosing of palonosetron injection 48 to 72 hours after chemotherapy appears to be safe and effective.<sup>3</sup> Palonosetron has a half-life of approximately 40 hours.<sup>1</sup>

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Prior Authorization is recommended for medical benefit coverage of palonosetron IV. Approval is recommended for those who meet the **Criteria** and **Dosing** for the listed indications. Extended approvals are allowed if the patient continues to meet the Criteria and Dosing. Requests for doses outside of the established dosing documented in this policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis by a clinician (i.e., Medical Director or Pharmacist). All approvals are provided for the duration noted below. In cases where the approval is authorized in months, 1 month is equal to 30 days. An approval duration of one month is sufficient in cases where approval is listed as one dose.

**Automation:** None.

*Indications and/or approval conditions noted with [\[EviCore\]](#) are managed by EviCore healthcare for those clients who use EviCore for oncology and/or oncology-related reviews. For these conditions, a prior authorization review should be directed to EviCore at [www.EviCore.com](http://www.EviCore.com).*

**RECOMMENDED AUTHORIZATION CRITERIA**

Coverage of palonosetron IV is recommended in those who meet one of the following criteria:

**FDA-Approved Indications**

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**1. Chemotherapy-Induced Nausea and Vomiting, Prevention.** [\[EviCore\]](#) Approve for 1 year.

**Dosing.** Approve ONE of the following dosing regimens (A or B):

- A) **Adults:** Approve up to a dose of 0.25 mg administered intravenously for up to two doses per cycle of chemotherapy; OR
- B) **Pediatrics (< 18 years of age):** Approve up to a dose of 20 mcg/kg (maximum dose 1.5 mg) administered intravenously for one dose per cycle of chemotherapy.

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**2. Postoperative Nausea and Vomiting, Prevention.** Approve for one dose if the patient is  $\geq 18$  years of age.

**Dosing.** Approve up to a dose of 0.075 mg intravenously for one dose.

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**CONDITIONS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL**

Coverage of palonosetron IV is not recommended in the following situations:

**1. Radiation-Induced Nausea and Vomiting.** Ondansetron and granisetron are the recommended 5-HT<sub>3</sub> receptor antagonists by NCCN (version 1.2025 – March 27, 2025) and ASCO (2020).<sup>2,3</sup> The guidelines note insufficient evidence for use of palonosetron IV.

**Note:** For patients also receiving chemotherapy in addition to radiation, refer to FDA-Approved Indication #1, Chemotherapy-Induced Nausea and Vomiting, Prevention.

**2.** Coverage is not recommended for circumstances not listed in the Recommended Authorization Criteria. Criteria will be updated as new published data are available.

## REFERENCES

1. Palonosetron intravenous injection or infusion [prescribing information]. Deerfield, IL: Baxter; September 2020.
2. Posfrea™ intravenous injection [prescribing information]. New Jersey: Avyxa, April 2025.
3. The NCCN Antiemesis Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (version 1.2026 – April 3, 2026). © 2026 National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Available at: [www.nccn.org](http://www.nccn.org). Accessed on May 8, 2026.
4. Hesketh PJ, Kris MG, Basch E, et al. Antiemetics: American Society of Clinical Oncology Clinical Practice Guideline Update. *J Clin Oncol*. 2020 Aug 20; 38(24):2782-2797.
5. Patel P, Robinson PD, Cohen M, et al. Prevention of acute and delayed chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting in pediatric cancer patients: A clinical practice guideline. *Pediatr Blood Cancer*. 2022;69(12):e30001.

## HISTORY

| Type of Revision  | Summary of Changes                                                                                                                                                                                   | Review Date |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Annual Revision   | <b>Title:</b> Updated from “Antiemetics – Aloxi Intravenous” to “Antiemetics – Palonosetron Intravenous”. No criteria changes.                                                                       | 05/01/2024  |
| Annual Revision   | <b>Chemotherapy-Induced Nausea and Vomiting, Prevention:</b> Adult dosing was updated from one dose per cycle to allow up to two doses per cycle of chemotherapy.                                    | 05/07/2025  |
| Selected Revision | Posfrea (palonosetron intravenous infusion) was added to the Policy.<br><br><b>Title:</b> Updated from “Antiemetics – Palonosetron Intravenous” to “Antiemetics – Palonosetron Intravenous Products” | 05/21/2025  |
| Annual Revision   | No criteria changes.                                                                                                                                                                                 | 05/13/2026  |