

## Gabapentin:

MO HealthNet (MHD) is lowering the maximum daily dose of gabapentin through the pharmacy system from 3600 mg to 2400 mg daily. The maximum daily dose limit change will be effective for claims with a date of service after April 6, 2023.

MHD is concerned with the potential for abuse and misuse of gabapentin, particularly at high doses. While gabapentin is not a controlled substance in Missouri, it is in several other states<sup>1</sup>. If your patients currently utilize more than 2400 mg of gabapentin daily, please consider tapering the dose to 2400 mg or less prior to April 6, 2023.

- According to the CDC, gabapentin was detected in almost 10% of overdose cases from 2019 to 2020<sup>2</sup>.
- Using opioids and gabapentin together can increase the amount of gabapentin absorbed by the body, potentially leading to higher risks when these drugs are used together<sup>3</sup>. Concurrent use of gabapentin and opioids was associated with a 49% higher risk of dying from an opioid overdose compared with opioid use alone<sup>4</sup>.
- Lower maximum daily dosage can reduce the risk of adverse effects and complications such as respiratory depression, sedation, and impaired cognitive and motor function<sup>5</sup>.
- A review of published studies found that the risk of adverse effects increases with higher doses of gabapentin<sup>6</sup> while another study found that gabapentin overdose was associated with a higher risk of hospitalization and death compared to overdose with other medications<sup>7</sup>.
- Reducing the maximum daily dosage of gabapentin may also help to reduce the risk of abuse and misuse. High doses of gabapentin can produce a feeling of euphoria, which can make it attractive to individuals who are seeking to get high<sup>8</sup>.
- A recent police report indicates the increasing tendency to use gabapentin as a "cutting agent" in street heroin. Like opiates, gabapentin is fatal in overdose, unlike opiates there is no antidote and the long half-life instills the need for prolonged, intensive management of overdose<sup>9</sup>.

**References:**

## References:

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