



Division of Specialized Care for Children

Medical Foods

Frequently Asked Questions



What are medical foods?

Medical foods are specially made low-protein foods used to supplement the special diet treatment of people with rare disorders of metabolism. These products range from baked goods, pasta, rice and starch mixes to meat and dairy substitutes and snack foods. These products are necessary to support normal growth and health.

Where can I order medical foods?

Medical foods are only available by prescription from a durable medical equipment (DME) company. They are not available in grocery stores.

When did medical foods become a benefit of the Medicaid program?

Medical foods became a Medicaid benefit per posted notice **effective Nov. 25, 2020**.

Who is eligible for coverage?

Medicaid participants through age 20 diagnosed with phenylketonuria (PKU), maple syrup urine disease (MSUD) or homocystinuria (HCU) may be eligible for coverage.

What kinds of medical foods are covered by this policy?

The policy covers low-protein foods, including baked goods, pasta, rice and starch mixes, meat and cheese substitutes and ready-made foods. If you have questions, talk to your metabolic dietitian or vendor (DME).

What medical foods are NOT covered?

Medicaid will not pay for food with little nutritional value including, but not limited to, cakes, cake mixes, candy, candy-covered items, chips, chocolate, chocolate-covered items, cookies, cookie dough or mix, dessert items, gum, onion rings, pies, foods fortified with caffeine, alcohol (unless a preservative) and foods containing cannabis or CBD.

The policy does not cover foods naturally low in protein (such as fruits, vegetables, condiments, etc.) that are found in grocery stores. Families should provide these foods.



What if I/my child has a metabolic disorder other than phenylketonuria (PKU), maple syrup urine disease (MSUD) or homocystinuria (HCU)?

You may contact the University of Illinois Chicago's [*Division of Specialized Care for Children*](#) to see if you qualify for our program assistance.

If I receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, also called food stamps, can I still get medical foods?

Yes. **SNAP** is unrelated to medical foods. The benefits are separate. A person who needs medical foods may qualify for both. Please discuss healthy options with your metabolic dietitian!

What is required from the medical team and where should it be submitted?

You must complete the Medical Food Nutrition Review Questionnaire (HFS 1313) along with the Prior Approval Request (HFS 1409) form. General instructions are included in the provider notice. The first request should include lab test results confirming diagnosis. Documentation must be provided that the participant is unable to achieve target levels of the relevant amino acid(s) with other treatment. Other documentation to include are dietary plans and growth charts.

- If the child has fee-for-service Medicaid (no managed care organization or MCO), this documentation and request should be submitted to HFS DME Prior Approvals.
- If the child has an MCO (Aetna, Blue Cross Blue Shield, etc.), this documentation and request must be submitted to that MCO plan.

What HCPCS code is used to bill medical foods?

HCPCS S9435 is the code used to bill for medical foods. Reference Chapter M-200 in the [*Handbook for Providers*](#) of Medical Equipment and Supplies (page 37 of the PDF). See the DME fee schedule for Medical Foods for Inborn Errors of Metabolism.

Where can I get more information about Medicaid coverage for medical foods?

You or your provider can find more at www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalProviders/notices/Pages/prn210413a.aspx.

What if my insurance doesn't cover medical foods, and I'm not eligible for Medicaid?

You may contact the University of Illinois Chicago's [*Division of Specialized Care for Children*](#) to see if you may qualify for our program assistance.

Contact us at **(800) 322-3722** for questions or for more information!

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