

**NC Medicaid  
Outpatient Pharmacy  
Prior Approval Criteria  
Simponi Aria  
Systemic Immunomodulators**

**Effective Date: June 27, 2018  
Amended Date: January 2, 2025**

**Therapeutic Class Code:** S2J  
**Therapeutic Class Description:** Immunomodulatory Agents

Medication
Simponi Aria Infusion

**Eligible Beneficiaries**

NC Medicaid (Medicaid) beneficiaries shall be enrolled on the date of service and may have service restrictions due to their eligibility category that would make them ineligible for this service.

**EPSDT Special Provision: Exception to Policy Limitations for Beneficiaries under 21 Years of Age**

**42 U.S.C. § 1396d(r) [1905(r) of the Social Security Act]**

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) is a federal Medicaid requirement that requires the state Medicaid agency to cover services, products, or procedures for Medicaid beneficiaries under 21 years of age **if** the service is **medically necessary health care** to correct or ameliorate a defect, physical or mental illness, or a condition [health problem] identified through a screening examination (includes any evaluation by a physician or other licensed clinician). This means EPSDT covers most of the medical or remedial care a child needs to improve or maintain his/her health in the best condition possible, compensate for a health problem, prevent it from worsening, or prevent the development of additional health problems. Medically necessary services will be provided in the most economic mode, as long as the treatment made available is similarly efficacious to the service requested by the beneficiary's physician, therapist, or other licensed practitioner; the determination process does not delay the delivery of the needed service; and the determination does not limit the beneficiary's right to a free choice of providers.

EPSDT does not require the state Medicaid agency to provide any service, product, or procedure

- a. that is unsafe, ineffective, or experimental/investigational.
- b. that is not medical in nature or not generally recognized as an accepted method of medical practice or treatment.

Service limitations on scope, amount, duration, frequency, location of service, and/or other specific criteria described in clinical coverage policies may be exceeded or may not apply as long as the provider's documentation shows that the requested service is medically necessary "to correct or ameliorate a defect, physical or mental illness, or a condition" [health problem]; that is, provider documentation shows how the service, product, or procedure meets all EPSDT criteria, including to correct or improve or maintain the beneficiary's health in the best condition possible, compensate for a health problem, prevent it from worsening, or prevent the development of additional health problems.

**EPSDT and Prior Approval Requirements**

If the service, product, or procedure requires prior approval, the fact that the beneficiary is under 21 years of age does **NOT** eliminate the requirement for prior approval.

**IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** about EPSDT and prior approval is found in the NCTracks Provider Claims and Billing Assistance Guide, and on the EPSDT provider page. The Web

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addresses are specified below.

*NCTracks Provider Claims and Billing Assistance Guide:*

<https://www.nctracks.nc.gov/content/public/providers/provider-manuals.html>

*EPSDT provider page:* <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/medicaid/get-started/find-programs-and-services-right-you/medicaid-benefit-children-and-adolescents>

**Criteria for approval**

**1. Ankylosing Spondylitis:**

- Beneficiary has a diagnosis of Ankylosing Spondylitis.  
AND
- Beneficiary is not on another injectable biologic immunomodulator.  
AND
- Beneficiary has been considered and screened for the presence of latent tuberculosis infection.  
AND
- Beneficiary has been tested with Hep B SAG and Core Ab.  
AND
- Beneficiary has experienced inadequate symptom relief from treatment with at least two NSAIDS.  
OR
- Beneficiary is unable to receive treatment with NSAIDS due to contraindications.  
OR
- Beneficiary has clinical evidence of severe or rapidly progressing disease.  
AND
- Coverage of non-preferred medications require a trial and failure of Cosentyx, Enbrel or Humira or a clinical reason beneficiary cannot try Cosentyx, Enbrel or Humira.

**2. Polyarticular Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (PJIA):.**

- Beneficiary has a diagnosis of Polyarticular Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis.  
AND
- Beneficiary is not on another injectable biologic immunomodulator.  
AND
- Beneficiary has been considered and screened for the presence of latent tuberculosis infection.  
AND
- Beneficiary has been tested with Hep B SAG and Core Ab.  
AND
- Beneficiary has tried one systemic corticosteroid (e.g. prednisone, methylprednisolone) or methotrexate, leflunomide or sulfasalazine with inadequate response or is unable to take these therapies due to contraindications.  
OR
- Beneficiary has PJIA subtype enthesitis related arthritis.  
AND
- Coverage of non-preferred medications require a trial and failure of Enbrel or Humira or a

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clinical reason beneficiary cannot try Enbrel or Humira.

**3. Psoriatic arthritis:**

- Beneficiary has a documented definitive diagnosis of Psoriatic Arthritis.  
AND
- Beneficiary is 2 years of age or older.  
AND
- Beneficiary is not on another injectable biologic immunomodulator.  
AND
- Beneficiary has been considered and screened for the presence of latent tuberculosis infection.  
AND
- Beneficiary has been tested with Hep B SAG and Core Ab.  
AND
- Beneficiary has a documented inadequate response or inability to take methotrexate.  
AND
- Coverage of non-preferred medications require a trial and failure of Cosentyx, Enbrel or Humira or a clinical reason beneficiary cannot try either Cosentyx, Enbrel or Humira.

**4. Rheumatoid arthritis:**

- Beneficiary has a diagnosis of Rheumatoid Arthritis.  
AND
- Beneficiary is not on another injectable biologic immunomodulator.  
AND
- Beneficiary has been considered and screened for the presence of latent tuberculosis infection.  
AND
- Beneficiary has been tested with Hep B SAG and Core Ab.  
AND
- Beneficiary has experienced a therapeutic failure/inadequate response with methotrexate or at least one disease modifying antirheumatic drug (e.g. leflunomide, hydroxychloroquine, minocycline, sulfasalazine).  
OR
- Beneficiary is unable to receive methotrexate or disease modifying antirheumatic drug due to contraindications or intolerabilities.  
OR
- Beneficiary has clinical evidence of severe or rapidly progressing disease.  
AND
- Coverage of non-preferred medications require a trial and failure of Enbrel or Humira or a clinical reason beneficiary cannot try either Enbrel or Humira.

**Procedures**

- Approve for up to 12 months.
- Coverage of one injectable immunomodulator at a time.

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**References**

1. Janssen Biotech, Inc. Simponi Aria Prescribing Information. Horsham, PA: January 2017. Updated September 2020.

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**Criteria Change Log**

06/27/2018	Criteria effective date
02/26/2019	add Simponi Aria for DX Ankylosing Spondylitis,
02/01/2021	Added Simponi Aria for Polyarticular Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis Updated age for Simponi Aria for Psoriatic Arthritis
01/02/2025	Separated out criteria by individual agents