

Combo Pack Kits Convenient or Costly?



Overall drug costs for workers' compensation have begun to drop in recent years due in large part to a focus on utilization management. To achieve this, First Script® is continuously working to identify ways to ensure appropriate care while addressing leakage. In keeping with this goal, First Script is applying clinical controls to identify and block the dispensing of prescriptions for Fixed Combination & Co-Packaged Drugs, referred to as Combo Pack Kits.

What is a Combo Pack Kit?

Combo Pack Kits consist of multiple products that are conveniently packaged together for sale. The kits can contain combinations of over-the-counter (OTC) medications, prescription medications, and/or medical devices and supplies. These packaged products can be used at the same time or independently for a common therapeutic purpose.

Identifying The Kits

The identification of Combo Pack Kits remains elusive as the manufacturer is able to obtain a unique, single National Drug Code (NDC) for each multi-ingredient kit vs. each individual item. By doing so, manufacturers are able to charge more for the kits under the assumption that the multi-ingredient product more closely meets the needs of the medical condition.



Cost vs. Benefit

These kits are often sold at a much higher rate than when packaged individually. Frequently, all the components of the kits are not medically necessary, and offer little or no added value beyond what the same individually-prescribed items would provide. In cases where the combined products are medically necessary there is typically a cost savings achieved when necessary items are prescribed and dispensed individually.

For example, in one kit containing a topical cream jointly packaged with a silicone gel sheet the Average Wholesale Price (AWP) was inflated to \$5,170.00 While this may seem extreme, there are many similar mark-up examples.

\$59.00 vs. \$5,170.00



Addressing Hidden Costs

To address this hidden expense, and continue to ensure that injured workers receive their needed medications and supplies, First Script identifies these kits, applies clinical controls, and blocks their dispensing at the pharmacy without a prior authorization. In addition, specific messaging proactively alerts claims examiners that alternatives are available for the injured worker without inflating the cost of their required prescriptions.



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