 

**Medical Necessity Letter**

The draft letter presented here is for informational purposes only and is not intended to provide reimbursement or legal advice. Arbor Pharmaceuticals does not guarantee that the use of any information provided below will result in coverage or payment by any third‐party payer. You are responsible for the submission based on your clinical judgment and your knowledge of the patient's unique situation.

# INDICATIONS:

# HORIZANT® (gabapentin enacarbil) Extended‐Release Tablets are indicated for the treatment of moderate‐to‐severe primary Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) in adults. HORIZANT is not recommended for patients who are required to sleep during the daytime and remain awake at night.

**HORIZANT® (gabapentin enacarbil) Extended‐Release Tablets are indicated for the management of postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) in adults.**

# IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

## Effects on Driving

HORIZANT may cause significant driving impairment. The duration of driving impairment after starting therapy is unknown. Patients should not drive until they have enough experience on HORIZANT to know if it impairs their driving. Patients’ ability to assess their driving competence and degree of somnolence caused by HORIZANT can be imperfect.

## Somnolence/Sedation and Dizziness

HORIZANT causes somnolence/sedation and dizziness. Patients should not drive or operate other complex machinery until they have enough experience on HORIZANT to know if it impairs their ability to perform these tasks.

## Lack of Interchangeability with Gabapentin

HORIZANT is not interchangeable with other gabapentin products because of differing pharmacokinetic profiles. The same dose of HORIZANT results in different plasma concentrations of gabapentin relative to other gabapentin products. The safety and effectiveness of HORIZANT in patients with epilepsy have not been studied.

## Suicidal Behavior and Ideation

HORIZANT is a prodrug of gabapentin, an antiepileptic drug (AED). AEDs increase the risk of suicidal thoughts or behavior in patients taking these drugs for any indication. As a prodrug of gabapentin, HORIZANT also increases this risk. Patients treated with any AED for any indication should be monitored for the emergence or worsening of depression, suicidal thoughts or behavior, and/or any unusual changes in mood or behavior. Anyone considering prescribing HORIZANT must balance the risk of suicidal thoughts or behavior with the risk of untreated illness.

Patients, caregivers, and families should be informed that HORIZANT increases the risk of suicidal thoughts and behavior and should be advised of the need to be alert for the emergence or worsening of the signs and symptoms of depression, any unusual changes in mood or behavior, or the emergence of suicidal thoughts, behavior, or thoughts of self‐harm.

Behaviors of concern should be reported immediately to healthcare providers.

## Respiratory Depression

There is evidence from case reports, human studies, and animal studies associating gabapentin with serious, lifethreatening, or fatal respiratory depression when co‐administered with central nervous system (CNS) depressants, including opioids, or in the setting of underlying respiratory impairment. When the decision is made to co‐prescribe HORIZANT with another CNS depressant, particularly an opioid, or to prescribe HORIZANT to patients with underlying respiratory impairment, monitor patients for symptoms of respiratory depression and sedation, and consider initiating HORIZANT at a low dose. The management of respiratory depression may include close observation, supportive measures, and reduction or withdrawal of CNS depressants (including HORIZANT).

## Drug Reaction With Eosinophilia and Systemic Symptoms (DRESS)/Multiorgan Hypersensitivity

Drug Reaction with Eosinophilia and Systemic Symptoms (DRESS), also known as multiorgan hypersensitivity, has been reported in patients taking antiepileptic drugs, including gabapentin. HORIZANT is a prodrug of gabapentin. Some of these events have been fatal or life‐threatening. DRESS typically, although not exclusively, presents with fever, rash, and/or lymphadenopathy, in association with other organ system involvement, such as hepatitis, nephritis, hematological abnormalities, myocarditis, or myositis sometimes resembling an acute viral infection. Eosinophilia is often present. Because this disorder is variable in its expression, other organ systems not noted here may be involved.

It is important to note that early manifestations of hypersensitivity, such as fever or lymphadenopathy, may be present even though rash is not evident. If such signs or symptoms are present, the patient should be evaluated immediately. HORIZANT should be discontinued if an alternative etiology for the signs or symptoms cannot be established.

## Discontinuation of HORIZANT

When discontinuing HORIZANT, patients with RLS receiving 600 mg or less once daily can discontinue the drug without tapering. If the recommended dose is exceeded, the dose should be reduced to 600 mg daily for 1 week prior to discontinuation to minimize the potential of withdrawal seizure.

In patients with PHN receiving HORIZANT twice daily, the dose should be reduced to once daily for 1 week prior to discontinuation to minimize the potential of withdrawal seizure.

## Tumorigenic Potential

In an oral carcinogenicity study, gabapentin enacarbil increased the incidence of pancreatic acinar cell adenoma and carcinoma in male and female rats. The clinical significance of this finding is unknown.

# ADVERSE REACTIONS

The most common adverse reactions for patients with RLS (incidence >10% and at least 2 times the rate of placebo) were somnolence/sedation and dizziness.

The most common adverse reactions for patients with PHN (incidence >10% and greater than placebo) were dizziness, somnolence, and headache.

# DRUG INTERACTIONS

Gabapentin enacarbil is released faster from HORIZANT Extended‐Release tablets in the presence of alcohol. Consumption of alcohol is not recommended when taking HORIZANT.

HORIZANT taken in conjunction with morphine causes increased somnolence/sedation, dizziness, and nausea.

# USE IN SPECIAL POPULATIONS

## Pregnancy and Lactation

There are no adequate data on the developmental risk associated with the use of HORIZANT in pregnant women. In nonclinical studies in rats and rabbits, administration of gabapentin enacarbil was developmentally toxic when administered to pregnant animals at doses and gabapentin exposures greater than those used clinically.

It is not known whether gabapentin derived from HORIZANT is secreted in human milk; however, gabapentin is secreted into human milk following oral administration of other gabapentin products. There are no data on the effects of gabapentin on the breastfed infant or the effects on milk production. The developmental and health benefits of breastfeeding should be considered along with the mother’s clinical need for HORIZANT and any potential adverse effects on the breastfed infant from HORIZANT or from the underlying maternal condition.

**Pediatric Use**

Safety and effectiveness of HORIZANT in pediatric patients have not been studied.

## Geriatric Use

Clinical trials of HORIZANT for the treatment of RLS did not include a sufficient number of patients 65 years and older to determine whether they respond differently from younger individuals. Because elderly patients are more likely to have a decreased renal function, the frequency of dosing may need to be adjusted based on calculated creatinine clearance in these patients.

## Renal Impairment

Gabapentin is known to be almost exclusively excreted by the kidney, and the risk of adverse reactions to this drug may be greater in patients with impaired renal function. The dose of HORIZANT should be adjusted in patients with renal impairment based upon creatinine clearance. HORIZANT is not recommended for treatment of RLS in patients receiving hemodialysis.

**For additional safety information, please see the HORIZANT full Prescribing Information at [www.horizant.com/pdf/Horizant-Prescribing\_Information.pdf.](http://www.horizant.com/pdf/Horizant-Prescribing-Information.pdf)**

**To report SUSPECTED ADVERSE REACTIONS, contact Azurity Pharmaceuticals, Inc. at 1‐800‐416‐7449 or FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or** [**www.fda.gov/medwatch**](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch)**.**

**SAMPLE Letter of Medical Necessity**

<VARIABLE DATE>

<VARIABLE PAYER NAME>

<VARIABLE PAYER ADDRESS>

<VARIABLE CITY, STATE>

<VARIABLE PAYER FAX NUMBER> Attn: <VARIABLE ATTN>

Re: Coverage of HORIZANT® (gabapentin enacarbil) Extended‐Release Tablets for <DOSE STRENGTH AND ADMINISTRATION>

<VARIABLE PATIENT NAME>

<VARIABLE PATIENT DATE OF BIRTH>

<VARIABLE PATIENT MEMBER ID>

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to request approval of <DOSE STRENGTH AND ADMINISTRATION> of HORIZANT® (gabapentin enacarbil) Extended‐Release Tablets to treat my <VARIABLE PATIENT AGE>‐year‐old <VARIABLE PATIENT GENDER> adult patient diagnosed with moderate to severe primary Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) <DIAGNOSIS CODE> on <VARIABLE DATE>. This letter provides details about <VARIABLE PATIENT NAME>’s medical history, diagnosis, and clinical considerations along with a summary of my treatment rationale for prescribing <DOSE STRENGTH AND ADMINISTRATION> of HORIZANT for <SPECIFIC LENGTH OF TREATMENT>. The full Prescribing Information for HORIZANT can be accessed at www.horizant.com/pdf/Horizant-[Prescribing](http://www.horizant.com/pdf/Horizant-Prescribing-Information.pdf)\_Information.pdf.

<VARIABLE PATIENT NAME>’s medical history includes the following:

<DESCRIBE THE PATIENT’S MEDICAL HISTORY, DIAGNOSIS, ETC.>

<VARIABLE PATIENT NAME>’s prior treatment history includes the following:

<DESCRIBE THE PATIENT’S PRIOR TREATMENT HISTORY>

<VARIABLE PATIENT NAME> is currently covered by <VARIABLE PAYER INFORMATION>.

## Clinical Considerations

< EXERCISE YOUR CLINICAL JUDGMENT AND SELECT 1 OF THE 3 CLINICAL CONSIDERATION OPTIONS >

< OPTION 1 >

## Clinical Consideration: Patient has clinical diagnosis of primary Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS).

I believe HORIZANT is a suitable and effective therapy choice for the following reasons:

* HORIZANT is indicated for the treatment of adults with moderate to severe primary Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)1
* The effectiveness of HORIZANT for the treatment of moderate to severe primary RLS in adults was demonstrated in two 12‐week clinical studies1
* The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) clinical practice guideline for the treatment of RLS in adults recommends HORIZANT as a pharmacologic treatment for RLS, stating there is strong evidence (Level A) to support the use of gabapentin enacarbil [HORIZANT] for these patients2

HORIZANT is an appropriate treatment option compared to other formulary alternatives for the following reasons:

* HORIZANT is the only gabapentinoid FDA‐approved to treat moderate to severe primary RLS1,3
* HORIZANT is an extended‐release formulation of gabapentin enacarbil, a prodrug of gabapentin1
* HORIZANT is not interchangeable with other gabapentin products because of differing pharmacokinetic profiles. The same dose of HORIZANT results in different plasma concentrations of gabapentin relative to other gabapentin products1

< OPTION 2 >

## Clinical Consideration: Patient is currently taking HORIZANT for the treatment of Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) and needs to continue therapy for continuity of care.

I believe HORIZANT is a suitable and effective therapy choice for the following reasons:

* HORIZANT is indicated for the treatment of adults with moderate to severe primary Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)1
* The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) clinical practice guideline for the treatment of RLS in adults recommends HORIZANT as a pharmacologic treatment for RLS, stating there is strong evidence (Level A) to support the use of gabapentin enacarbil (HORIZANT) for these patients2

In my medical opinion, I believe that abandoning HORIZANT, an effective drug therapy that is successfully treating

<VARIABLE PATIENT NAME>’s RLS, is inappropriate for the following reasons:

* HORIZANT is the only gabapentinoid FDA‐approved to treat moderate to severe primary RLS1,3
* HORIZANT is an extended‐release formulation of gabapentin enacarbil, a prodrug of gabapentin1
* HORIZANT is not interchangeable with other gabapentin products because of differing pharmacokinetic profiles. The same dose of HORIZANT results in different plasma concentrations of gabapentin relative to other gabapentin products1

< OPTION 3 >

## Clinical Consideration: Patient meets the medical criteria for the diagnosis of Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) and HORIZANT is the most appropriate treatment for this condition.

I believe HORIZANT is a suitable and effective therapy choice for the following reasons:

* HORIZANT is indicated for the treatment of adults with moderate to severe primary Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)1
* The effectiveness of HORIZANT for the treatment of moderate to severe primary RLS in adults was demonstrated in two 12‐week clinical studies1
* The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) clinical practice guideline for the treatment of RLS in adults recommends HORIZANT as a pharmacologic treatment for RLS, stating there is strong evidence (Level A) to support the use of gabapentin enacarbil (HORIZANT) for these patients2
* The other class of medications approved for the treatment of RLS is dopamine agonists (Mirapex® [pramipexole dihydrochloride], Requip® [ropinirole hydrochloride], and Neupro® [rotigotine transdermal system]), and in my clinical evaluation of the benefit‐risk for dopamine agonists, I have determined that these medications are not appropriate for the treatment of my patient’s condition4‐7

I am requesting that <VARIABLE HEALTH PLAN> consider coverage of HORIZANT due to the following:

* Patient has tried and failed/intolerant to <SPECIFY WHAT THE TREATMENTS WERE> formulary alternative(s)
* HORIZANT is the only gabapentinoid FDA‐approved to treat moderate to severe primary RLS1,3
* HORIZANT is an extended‐release formulation of gabapentin enacarbil, a prodrug of gabapentin1
* HORIZANT is not interchangeable with other gabapentin products because of differing pharmacokinetic profiles; the same dose of HORIZANT results in different plasma concentrations of gabapentin relative to other gabapentin products1

Given the <VARIABLE PATIENT MEDICAL HISTORY>, <VARIABLE PATIENT CONDITION>, and the supporting clinical information, I believe a <300 mg or 600 mg> dose of HORIZANT for <ADMINISTRATION> is medically necessary for

<VARIABLE PATIENT NAME>. HORIZANT is indicated for the treatment of moderate to severe primary RLS in adults. If I can provide any additional information, please contact me at <VARIABLE PHONE/FAX NUMBER> to ensure the prompt approval of this course of treatment.

For additional information on this topic, please email medical.information@azurity.com, contact Azurity Pharmaceuticals, Inc. at (800) 461-7449, or visit [www.horizant.com.](http://www.horizant.com.)

For information about Azurity Pharmaceuticals’ Patient Assistance Program, please visit www.[azuritysolutions.com.](http://www.azuritysolutions.com)

Regards,

<VARIABLE PHYSICIAN NAME>

## References

1. Horizant [prescribing information]. Atlanta, GA: Arbor Pharmaceuticals, LLC.
2. Winkelman JW, Armstrong MJ, Allen RP, et al. Practice guideline summary: treatment of restless legs syndrome in adults: report of the guideline development, dissemination, and implementation subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology. *Neurology*. 2016;87(24):2585‐2593.
3. Orange Book: Approved Drug Products with Therapeutic Equivalence Evaluations. Rockville, MD: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Office of Pharmaceutical Science, Office of Generic Drugs; 2020. Accessed January 5, 2022. https://[www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/ob/index.cfm](http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/ob/index.cfm)
4. Food and Drug Administration. Letter from CDER to Public Citizen. 2019. Accessed June 24, 2020. https://[www.regulations.gov/document?D=FDA](http://www.regulations.gov/document?D=FDA)‐2017‐P‐3486‐0016
5. Mirapex [prescribing information]. Ridgefield, CT: Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
6. Neupro [prescribing information]. Smyrna, GA: UCB, Inc.
7. Requip [prescribing information]. Research Triangle Park, NC: GlaxoSmithKline.

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