

**POLICY:** Oncology (Injectable) – Imlygic Utilization Management Medical Policy

- Imlygic® (talimogene laherparepvec intralesional injection – Amgen)

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 1/1/2021

**LAST REVISION DATE:** 04/02/2025

**COVERAGE CRITERIA FOR:** All Aspirus Medicare Plans

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### OVERVIEW

Imlygic is an oncolytic viral therapy indicated for the local treatment of unresectable cutaneous, subcutaneous, and nodal lesions in patients with **melanoma** recurrent after initial surgery.<sup>1</sup>

Limitation of use: Imlygic has not been shown to improve overall survival or have an effect on visceral metastases.

### Dosing

In the pivotal trial, the initial dose of Imlygic was administered at  $10^6$  plaque forming units (PFU)/mL (to seroconvert herpes simplex virus-seronegative patients).<sup>1</sup> Subsequent doses were  $10^8$  PFU/mL administered 3 weeks after the first dose, then every 2 weeks. Total volume of Imlygic was up to 4.0 mL per treatment session. It may not be possible to inject all lesions at each treatment visit or over the full course of treatment. Previously injected and/or uninjected lesions may be injected at subsequent treatment visits. Continue treatment for at least 6 months unless other treatment is required or until there are no injectable lesions to treat. Imlygic may be reinitiated if new unresectable cutaneous, subcutaneous, or nodal lesions appear after a complete response. Refer to the [Appendix](#) for injection volume associated with lesion size.

### Guidelines

Imlygic is addressed in guidelines from National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN):

- **Melanoma: Cutaneous:** NCCN guidelines (version 2.2025 – January 28, 2025) list Imlygic as an option in multiple treatment situations, including for Stage III melanoma; for recurrent disease (including nodal recurrence); for disseminated metastatic disease; for metastatic or unresectable disease following disease progression or maximal clinical benefit from BRAF targeted therapy (category 1 as initial or subsequent therapy for stage III disease; all others category 2A), and in combination with Yervoy® (ipilimumab intravenous infusion) for metastatic or unresectable disease as second-line or subsequent therapy for disease progression, intolerance and/or projected risk of progression with BRAF-targeted therapy (category 2B).<sup>2</sup>

- **Merkel Cell Carcinoma:** NCCN guidelines (version 1.2025 – January 13, 2025) recommend Imlygic as a single-agent if anti-programmed death receptor (PD)-ligand (L1) or anti-PD-1 therapy is contraindicated for regional disease or distant (M1) metastatic disseminated disease.<sup>3</sup>

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Prior Authorization is recommended for medical benefit coverage of Imlygic. Approval is recommended for those who meet the **Criteria** and **Dosing** for the listed indication. Extended approvals are allowed if the patient continues to meet the criteria and dosing. Requests for doses outside of the established dosing documented in this policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis by a clinician (i.e., Medical Director or Pharmacist). All approvals are provided for the duration noted below. In cases where the approval is authorized in months, 1 month is equal to 30 days. Because of the specialized skills required for evaluation and diagnosis of patients treated with Imlygic as well as the monitoring required for adverse events and long-term efficacy, approval requires Imlygic to be prescribed by or in consultation with a physician who specializes in the condition being treated.

**Automation:** None.

### **RECOMMENDED AUTHORIZATION CRITERIA**

Coverage of Imlygic is recommended in those who meet the following criteria:

### **FDA-Approved Indication**

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- 1. Melanoma.** Approve for the duration noted if the patient meets ONE of the following (A or B):
    - A) Initial Therapy** Approve for 6 months if the patient meets ALL of the following (i, ii, and iii):

Note: This includes reinitiation in patients with new lesions following a complete response.

      - i.** Patient is  $\geq 18$  years of age; AND
      - ii.** Imlygic will be directly injected into advanced, metastatic, recurrent, or unresectable cutaneous, subcutaneous, or nodal lesions; AND
      - iii.** Imlygic will be administered by or in consultation with an oncologist, dermatologist, or surgeon; OR
    - B) Patient is Currently Receiving Imlygic.** Approve for 1 year if the patient meets ALL of the following (i, ii, and iii):
      - i.** Patient has remaining injectable lesions for treatment; AND
      - ii.** According to the prescriber, the patient has not experienced clinically relevant disease progression (e.g., disease progression associated with a decline in performance status and/or alternative therapy was needed); AND
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- iii. Imlygic will be administered by or in consultation with an oncologist, dermatologist, or surgeon.

**Dosing.** Approve the following dosing regimens:

- A) The dose is ONE of the following (i or ii):
  - i. The initial dose is  $10^6$  (1 million) plaque-forming units (PFU)/mL; OR
  - ii. Subsequent doses are  $10^8$  (100 million) PFU per mL with the second dose given 3 weeks after the initial dose and all additional doses (including reinitiation) are given no more frequently than once every 2 weeks; AND
- B) Up to a maximum of 4 mL is administered per treatment visit.

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### Other Uses with Supportive Evidence

- 2. **Merkel Cell Carcinoma.** Approve for 1 year if the patient meets ALL of the following (A, B, C, and D):

- A) Patient is  $\geq 18$  years of age; AND
- B) Patient has regional or distant metastatic disease; AND
- C) Patient meets ONE of the following (i or ii):
  - i. Patient has a contraindication to checkpoint immunotherapy; OR  
Note: Checkpoint immunotherapy includes Bavencio (avelumab intravenous infusion), Keytruda (pembrolizumab intravenous infusion), Opdivo (nivolumab intravenous infusion), and Zynyz (retifanlimab-dlwr intravenous infusion).
  - ii. Patient has progressed on checkpoint immunotherapy; AND  
Note: Checkpoint immunotherapy includes Bavencio (avelumab intravenous infusion), Keytruda (pembrolizumab intravenous infusion), Opdivo (nivolumab intravenous infusion), and Zynyz (retifanlimab-dlwr intravenous infusion).
- D) Medication is prescribed by or in consultation with an oncologist, dermatologist, or surgeon.

**Dosing.** Approve BOTH of the following (A and B):

- A) The dose is ONE of the following (i or ii):
  - i. The initial dose is  $10^6$  (1 million) plaque-forming units (PFU)/mL; OR
  - ii. Subsequent doses are  $10^8$  (100 million) PFU per mL with the second dose given 3 weeks after the initial dose and all additional doses (including reinitiation) are given no more frequently than once every 2 weeks; AND
- B) Up to a maximum of 4 mL is administered per treatment visit.

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### CONDITIONS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

Coverage of Imlygic is not recommended in the following situations:

- 1. Concurrent Use with Anti-Herpetic Viral Agents.** Imlygic is a genetically modified, live, attenuated herpes simplex virus-1 that is sensitive to acyclovir. Anti-herpetic viral agents (e.g., acyclovir, valacyclovir, famciclovir) may interfere with efficacy.<sup>1</sup>
- 2. Immunocompromised Patients.** Imlygic is contraindicated in patients who are immunocompromised, including those with a history of primary or acquired immunodeficient states, leukemia, lymphoma, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, or other clinical manifestations of infection with human immunodeficiency viruses, and those on immunosuppressive therapy.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.** Coverage is not recommended for circumstances not listed in the Recommended Authorization Criteria. Criteria will be updated as new published data are available.

## REFERENCES

1. Imlygic intralesional injection [prescribing information]. Thousand Oaks, CA: BioVex/Amgen; February 2023.
2. The NCCN Cutaneous Melanoma Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (version 2.2025 – January 28, 2025). © 2025 National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Available at: <http://www.nccn.org>. Accessed on March 31, 2025.
3. The NCCN Merkel Cell Carcinoma Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (version 1.2025 – January 13, 2025 © 2025 National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Available at: <http://www.nccn.org>. Accessed on March 31, 2025.

## HISTORY

Type of Revision	Summary of Changes	Review Date
Annual Revision	No criteria changes	04/05/2023
Annual Revision	No criteria changes	04/10/2024
Aspirus P&T Review	Policy reviewed and approved by Aspirus P&T committee. Annual review process	09/16/2024
Annual Revision	<p><b>Melanoma:</b> The following verbiage, “This includes reinitiation in patients with new lesions following a complete response,” was moved to a Note. The requirement of specialist was reworded to Imlygic will be administered by or in consultation with an oncologist, dermatologist, or surgeon. Previously it was, “Imlygic will be administered by or under the supervision of an oncologist, dermatologist, or surgeon.”</p> <p><b>Merkel Cell Carcinoma:</b> Indication and criteria were added to Other Uses with Supportive Evidence.</p>	04/02/2025

## APPENDIX

Lesion Size (longest dimension)	Injection volume
> 5 cm	Up to 4 mL
> 2.5 cm to 5 cm	Up to 2 mL
> 1.5 cm to 2.5 cm	Up to 1 mL
> 0.5 cm to 1.5 cm	Up to 0.5 mL
≤ 0.5 cm	Up to 0.1 mL