



If your HS treatment was denied

Three things the new HS treatment guidelines say about coverage. You can show this page to your doctor's office.

If you were told to fail other treatments first

Step therapy, an insurance requirement that patients complete a sequence of insurer-designated treatments before coverage is approved for a physician-prescribed therapy, lacks evidence of clinical benefit and is associated with treatment delays, reduced access to guideline-concordant care, and worse clinical outcomes.

FROM THE AAD AND HS FOUNDATION TREATMENT GUIDELINES

Being made to try and fail cheaper treatments first is called **step therapy**. The doctors who wrote the guidelines found no proof it helps patients, and found it is tied to longer waits and worse health.

If you were told you need a severity score

HS recommendations specific to moderate to severe HS should not be interpreted as requirements for documenting HS severity using specific measures before patients should access HS treatments.

FROM THE AAD AND HS FOUNDATION TREATMENT GUIDELINES

Some of the strongest recommendations are for people with moderate or severe HS. That does not mean you need a particular test score to qualify. The guidelines say so directly, and add that the scoring tools used in research were never built for clinic use.

If you were told the evidence is weak

Guidelines rate two separate things. How strongly they recommend something, and how certain they are about the research behind it. Those are not the same.

HS has not been studied as long or as well as many conditions, so a lot of the research is rated low. The guidelines say that rating is about the state of the research, not about whether a treatment works. One of the four most strongly recommended medicines sits on research rated low certainty, and it is still among their strongest recommendations.

WHAT TO DO WITH THIS

Bring it to the person at your doctor's office who handles prior authorizations and appeals. They do this every day and they know the process. Ask for the reason you were denied in writing, because the reason determines what comes next.

The HS Foundation is working with health plans and federal agencies to change how HS treatments are covered. What you went through is the evidence that work runs on.