

Despite being available for over 50 years, long-acting injectable antipsychotics (LAIs) remain an underutilized treatment option for people with serious and persistent mental illness. These injectable medications can help patients better manage their condition and improve long-term outcomes by preventing relapses and enhancing medication adherence.

- ➔ [**American Psychiatric Association \(APA\) Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Patients with Schizophrenia \(2020\)**](#)

LAIs are primarily used for individuals who struggle with adherence to antipsychotic medications. LAIs have been demonstrated through research to help:

- ➔ Improve adherence
- ➔ Reduce the occurrence and frequency of symptom relapse
- ➔ Reduce rehospitalization
- ➔ Improve treatment outcomes for this population

Transitioning to an LAI

While some patients start right away on an LAI, others start treatment on oral medications but may prefer using an injectable medication so that they do not have the burden of taking daily medications. Below are some tips to keep in mind when considering initiating treatment with or transitioning a patient to an LAI.

- ➔ Transition with oral medications to make sure the patient can tolerate it
- ➔ Start at lower doses and slowly increase the dose as tolerated
- ➔ Maintain necessary oral medications for extrapyramidal symptoms (EPS)
- ➔ Attempt to taper anti-EPS medications after starting the LAI
- ➔ Consider checking plasma levels (when indicated) to make sure they are within the therapeutic range

Addressing Patient Barriers

Patients with behavioral health conditions face additional barriers to managing their conditions. Below are some considerations to keep in mind when dealing with this patient population.

- ➔ Discuss treatment plans with the patient's family members or others involved in their care
- ➔ Ensure that the patient has a plan for how they will get to the office or pharmacy for their injections
 - » Offering transportation or reminder cards and involving family in the care can help prevent missed appointments.
 - » The Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) is a shared ride transportation service available to people receiving Medical Assistance and is paid for by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS). [**Additional information on MATP can be found here.**](#)
- ➔ Avoid use of stigmatizing language
- ➔ Educate patients to prevent a negative perception of long-acting medications

- Employ a trauma-informed approach where you engage the patient in conversations and highlight that they are able to express their choices and preferences

Additional tips can be found in the [National Council for Mental Wellbeing Guide to Long-acting Medications](#).

Patient Considerations

While there are many advantages to using LAIs, there are some factors to consider that may be unfavorable for some patients:

- Slow dose titration and longer time to achieve steady state levels
- Delayed relief of distressing or severe psychiatric side effects
- Pain at injection site, leakage into surrounding tissue, and potential for irritation and lesions
- Burden of needing frequent, reliable travel to outpatient clinics/pharmacies to receive injections
- Possible perception of stigma

For reference, please read [Long-Acting Injectable Antipsychotics: A Practical Guide for Prescribers](#).

Transitions of Care

LAIs may be appropriate for patients who are transitioning between settings, such as patients being discharged from an inpatient stay, where there may be concerns for nonadherence.

If your inpatient practice does not have a pharmacy that can dispense LAIs, the following LAIs have a hospital inpatient free trial program:

- [Abilify Maintena](#)® | 1-888-596-2745
- [Aristada](#)® | 1-844-341-6431
- [Invega Sustenna](#)® | 1-800-240-5746
- [Uzedy](#)® | 1-833-988-2531

There are concerns that patients who are discharged with an LAI may not follow up with an outpatient provider. However, there is research to suggest that patients initiated on an LAI during their inpatient stay are more likely to have an outpatient follow-up after discharge compared to their peers initiated on an oral antipsychotic.¹ Additionally, providing an LAI prescription with refills may be beneficial for patients who have difficulty getting follow-up care.

Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center

The [Merakey Mental Health Walk-In Clinic](#) is currently Philadelphia's only adult behavioral health urgent care center, which provides same day mental health and/or substance use treatment for adults ages 18 years and older who can be safely maintained in the community.

¹ Patel C, Pilon D, Morrison L, Holiday C, Lafeuille MH, Lefebvre P, Benson C. Continuity of care among patients newly initiated on second-generation oral or long-acting injectable antipsychotics during a schizophrenia-related inpatient stay. *Curr Med Res Opin.* 2023 Aug;39(8):1157-1166.

For members on an LAI who currently do not have an outpatient provider, the Merakey Mental Health Walk-In Clinic may provide transitory support for individuals needing their injection while also helping to link and refer them to other treatment services that can provide more long-term care.

Location	Contact	Hours
Merakey Mental Health Walk-In Clinic 3125 N Broad Street Philadelphia, PA 19132	267-219-8801 WalkInPhilly@merakey.org	Open Daily: 11am - 6pm Closed: New Year's Day, MLK Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day

Care Coordination with Pharmaceutical Companies

Certain pharmaceutical companies offer care coordination services.

Pharmaceutical Company Care Coordination	Contact Number
Ability Maintena® Patient Assistance	1-855-727-6274
Ability Asimtufii® Patient Assistance	1-855-727-6274
Aristada® Patient Assistance	1-866-274-7823
Invega Sustenna® Patient Assistance	1-877-227-3728
Invega Trinza® Patient Assistance	1-877-227-3728
Invega Hafyera® Patient Assistance	1-877-227-3728
Risperdal Consta® Patient Assistance	1-877-227-3728
Uzedy® Patient Assistance	1-800-887-8100

Pharmacies that Provide LAI Services

The table below has information about pharmacies in the area that offer LAI services, such as dispensing and/or administration. Each pharmacy has different services available, but Altruix – Trevose Specialty Pharmacy, Shop and Carry Pharmacy, Sunray Specialty Pharmacy, and select ACME pharmacies offer the most services.

Pharmacy	Contact	Dispenses LAIs	Delivers to Provider Offices	Administers Onsite
ACME Pharmacies Multiple locations (see information below)	See information below	✓	✓	✓
Altruix – Trevose Specialty Pharmacy 3800 Horizon Blvd Suite #103 Trevose, PA 19053	P: 800-927-6703 F: 215-357-2129	✓	✓	✓
CVS Specialty (Center City) 1117 Walnut St Philadelphia, PA 19107	P: 215-627-2143 F: 215-627-8943	✓	✓	

Pharmacy	Contact	Dispenses LAIs	Delivers to Provider Offices	Administers Onsite
Elwyn Pharmacy 194 S New Middletown Rd Media, PA 19063	P: 610-566-2226 F: 610-566-0521			
Genoa Healthcare (North Philadelphia; located within COMHAR) 2600 N American St Philadelphia, PA 19133	P: 215-426-1007 F: 215-426-2667			
Genoa Healthcare (West Phila; located within Community Council Health Systems) 4900 Wyalusing Ave Philadelphia, PA 19131	P: 215-764-6519 F: 267-744-4459			
Jefferson Specialty Pharmacy 3500 Horizon Dr King of Prussia, PA 19406	P: 844-469-7542 F: 215-955-8182			
Shop and Carry Pharmacy (North Philadelphia) 1301 Lindley Ave Philadelphia, PA 19141	P: 267-297-5030 F: 267-297-5783			
Sunray Specialty Pharmacy (West Philadelphia) 152 S 52nd St, Suite 201 Philadelphia, PA 19139	P: 215-471-4000 F: 215-471-4001			
Walgreens Specialty – Community Pharmacy (Center City) 1227 Locust Street Philadelphia, PA 19107	P: 215-772-2772 F: 215-772-2798			

ACME Pharmacies

ACME pharmacies can administer LAIs at any of their pharmacy locations. The physician would send a prescription to one of the ACME stores with instructions on either administering the medication to the patient at the pharmacy or to be delivered to the medical office. If the medication is to be administered at the pharmacy, the pharmacy will contact the patient to schedule an appointment. The ACME pharmacy locations in the Philadelphia area are:

Northwest Philadelphia 7010 Germantown Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19119* 215-247-4995	Northeast Philadelphia 8200 Roosevelt Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19152 215-338-4967
Northeast Philadelphia 920 Red Lion Rd, Philadelphia, PA 19115 215-676-6279	Northeast Philadelphia 6601 Roosevelt Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19149* 215-338-6601
Northeast Philadelphia 180 West Girard Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19123 215-574-1221	Northwest Philadelphia 5927-59 Ridge Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19128* 215-487-3419

Northeast Philadelphia
2101-41 Cottman Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19149*
215-728-1015

Northwest Philadelphia
7700 Crittenden St, Philadelphia, PA 19118
215-248-6495

South Philadelphia
1400 E Passyunk Ave, Philadelphia PA 19147
215-551-3321

Southwest Philadelphia
1901 Johnston St, Philadelphia, PA 19145*
215-336-5553

Northeast Philadelphia
6640 Oxford Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19111*
215-725-9319

* These ACME locations have a private consultation room. Due to the site of administration and/or manufacturer requirements, Abilify Asimtufii®, Invega Hafyera®, and most doses of Aristada® must be administered in an ACME location with a consultation room.

Sunray Specialty Pharmacy

Sunray Specialty Pharmacy coordinates with other independent pharmacies within its network. The specialty store can dispense LAIs and deliver them to the pharmacy, where the pharmacist will administer the injectable to the patient. For patients who may need it, Sunray also offers car share services to get the patient to and from their preferred pharmacy location. In addition to the specialty location in West Philadelphia, the following pharmacies can administer LAIs:

Holmesburg Pharmacy (Northeast Philadelphia)
8039 Frankford Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19136
215-332-2400

Nice Pharmacy (Northeast Philadelphia)
110 E Allegheny Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19134
215-425-0100

Port Richmond Pharmacy (Northeast Philadelphia)
2636 E Allegheny Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19134
215-426-5099

Sunray Drugs – K&A (Northeast Philadelphia)
825 E Allegheny Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19134
215-425-7700

Sunray Drugs – Progress Plaza (North Philadelphia)
1501 N Broad St, Philadelphia, PA 19122
215-235-4000

FDA-Approved LAI Medications

First Generation

Drug	Dosing	PDL Status (updated 1/5/26)	Comments
Fluphenazine decanoate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Every 2-4 weeks ⇒ Intramuscular or subcutaneous 	Preferred	Dosing interval based on patient response
Haldol® decanoate (haloperidol decanoate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Every 4 weeks ⇒ Intramuscular 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Preferred: generic haloperidol decanoate ampule or vial ⇒ Non-preferred: brand name Haldol® decanoate ampule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Initiate at 10-20 times daily oral dose ⇒ If initial dose conversion is greater than 100mg, the dose should be split into two injections separated by 3-7 days

Second Generation

Drug	Dosing	PDL Status (updated 7/7/25)	Comments
Abilify Maintena® (aripiprazole monohydrate)	► Every 4 weeks ► Intramuscular	Preferred	Initiate with two injections of Abilify Maintena® 400mg and one dose of oral aripiprazole 20mg on the first day of treatment or with two weeks of overlap with an oral antipsychotic
Abilify Asimtufi® (aripiprazole monohydrate)	► Every 8 weeks ► Intramuscular	Preferred	► Initiate with one injection of Abilify Asimtufi® 960mg, one injection of Abilify Maintena® 400mg, and one dose of oral aripiprazole 20mg on the first day of treatment or with two weeks of overlap with an oral antipsychotic. ► Patients can also be transitioned from Abilify Maintena®
Aristada Initio® (aripiprazole lauroxil)	► N/A - single dose to initiate or re-initiate Aristada® ► Intramuscular	Preferred	Initiate first Aristada® injection with one injection of Aristada Initio® 675mg and one dose of oral aripiprazole 30mg or with three weeks of oral aripiprazole overlap
Aristada® (aripiprazole lauroxil)	► Every 4, 6, or 8 weeks ► Intramuscular	Preferred	
Erzofri® (paliperidone palmitate)	► Every 4 weeks ► Intramuscular	Non-preferred	Initiation dose is Erzofri® 351mg
Invega Sustenna® (paliperidone palmitate)	► Every 4 weeks ► Intramuscular	Preferred	Initiate with Invega Sustenna® 234mg followed by Invega Sustenna® 156mg one week later
Invega Trinza® (paliperidone palmitate)	► Every 3 months ► Intramuscular	Preferred	Establish adequate treatment with Invega Sustenna® for at least four months prior to transitioning
Invega Hafyera® (paliperidone palmitate)	► Every 6 months ► Intramuscular	Preferred	Establish adequate treatment with Invega Sustenna® for at least four months or Invega Trinza® for at least one three-month cycle before transitioning
Perseris® (risperidone)	► Every 4 weeks ► Subcutaneous	Preferred	Oral supplementation not required
Risperdal Consta® (risperidone)	► Every 2 weeks ► Intramuscular	Preferred (brand name Risperdal Consta® and generic)	Requires three weeks of overlap with an oral antipsychotic
Risperidone for Extended-Release Injectable Suspension			
Rykkindo® (risperidone)	► Every 2 weeks ► Intramuscular	Not Listed	Requires one week of overlap with oral risperidone

Drug	Dosing	PDL Status (updated 7/7/25)	Comments
<u>Uzedy® (risperidone)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Every 4 or 8 weeks ⇒ Subcutaneous 	Preferred	Switch from oral risperidone
<u>Zyprexa Relprevr® (olanzapine)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Every 2 or 4 weeks ⇒ Intramuscular 	Non-preferred	Requires monitoring for at least three hours post-injection

- ⇒ [PA DHS Medical Assistance Statewide Preferred Drug List \(PDL\)](#)
- ⇒ [PA DHS Fee-for-Service Pharmacy Prior Authorization General Requirements and Procedures](#) (contains details about when a clinical prior authorization is necessary)



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Includes medication wallet card, guides, tip sheets, and other valuable resources for members

[SCAN ME!](#)



Pharmacy Education and Resources for Providers
Includes the latest pharmaceutical information for CBH providers

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If you are a pharmacy within the Philadelphia area that offers LAI services and are not listed above, please contact our pharmacy team at cbh.pharmacyinitiatives@phila.gov.