

RHINOPLASTY AND OTHER NASAL SURGERIES

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[Instructions for Use](#) ⓘ

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Related Commercial Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic and Reconstructive Procedures • Orthognathic (Jaw) Surgery • Plagiocephaly and Craniosynostosis Treatment
Community Plan Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhinoplasty and Other Nasal Surgeries
Medicare Advantage Coverage Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nasal and Sinus Procedures

COVERAGE RATIONALE

Indications for Coverage

Some states require benefit coverage for services that UnitedHealthcare considers Cosmetic Procedures, such as repair of external Congenital Anomalies in the absence of a Functional Impairment. Please refer to the member specific benefit plan document.

Rhinoplasty-Primary (CPT Codes 30410, 30420)

Rhinoplasty-primary is considered reconstructive and medically necessary when all of the following criteria are present:

- Prolonged, persistent obstructed nasal breathing due to nasal bone and septal deviation that are the primary causes of an anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction; and
- The nasal airway obstruction cannot be corrected by septoplasty alone as documented in the medical record; and
- Photos clearly document the nasal bone/septal deviation as the primary cause of an anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction and are consistent with the clinical exam; and
- The proposed procedure is designed to correct the anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction and relieve the nasal airway obstruction by centralizing the nasal bony pyramid (30410) and also straightening the septum (30420); and
- One of the following is present:
 - Nasal fracture with nasal bone displacement severe enough to cause nasal airway obstruction; or
 - Residual large cutaneous defect following resection of a malignancy or nasal trauma; and
- Nasal airway obstruction is causing significant symptoms (e.g., chronic rhinosinusitis, difficulty breathing); and
- Obstructive symptoms persist despite conservative management for 4 weeks or greater, which includes, where appropriate, nasal steroids or immunotherapy.

Rhinoplasty-Tip (CPT Code 30400)

Rhinoplasty-tip is primarily cosmetic. However, it is considered reconstructive and medically necessary when all of the following criteria are present:

- Prolonged, persistent obstructed nasal breathing due to tip drop that is the primary cause of an anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction (this code is usually cosmetic); and
- Photos clearly document tip drop as the primary cause of an anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction and are consistent with the clinical exam (acute columellar-labial angle); and
- The proposed procedure is designed to correct the anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction and relieve the nasal airway obstruction by lifting the nasal tip; and
- Nasal airway obstruction is causing significant symptoms (e.g., chronic rhinosinusitis, difficulty breathing); and
- Obstructive symptoms persist despite conservative management for 4 weeks or greater, which includes, where appropriate, nasal steroids or immunotherapy.

Rhinoplasty-Secondary (CPT Codes 30430, 30435, 30450)

Rhinoplasty-secondary is primarily cosmetic. However, it is considered reconstructive and medically necessary when all of the following criteria are present:

- Required as treatment of a complication/residual deformity from primary surgery performed to address a Functional Impairment when a documented Functional Impairment persists due to the complication/deformity (these codes are usually cosmetic); and
- Photos clearly document the secondary deformity/complication as the primary cause of an anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction and are consistent with the clinical exam; and
- The proposed procedure is designed to correct the anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction and relieve the nasal airway obstruction by correcting the deformity or treating the complication (these codes are usually cosmetic); and
- Nasal airway obstruction is causing significant symptoms (e.g., chronic rhinosinusitis, difficulty breathing); and
- Obstructive symptoms persist despite conservative management for 4 weeks or greater, which includes, where appropriate, nasal steroids or immunotherapy.

Rhinoplasty for Congenital Anomalies (CPT Codes 30460, 30462)

The following are considered reconstructive and medically necessary when the following are present:

- Rhinoplasty is considered reconstructive when performed for a nasal deformity associated with congenital craniofacial anomalies including, but not limited to Pierre Robin, Apert Syndrome, Fraser Syndrome, Binder Syndrome, Goldenhar Syndrome, Nasal dermoids, Tessier Nasal Cleft (most commonly #1) or associated with a left lip or cleft palate.

Repair of Nasal Vestibular Stenosis or Alar Collapse (CPT Code 30465)

Repair of nasal vestibular stenosis or alar collapse is considered reconstructive and medically necessary when all of the following criteria are present:

- Prolonged, persistent obstructed nasal breathing due to internal and/or External Nasal Valve compromise (see [Definitions](#) section below); and
- Internal valve compromise due to collapse of the upper lateral cartilage and/or External Nasal Valve compromise due to collapse of the alar (lower lateral) cartilage resulting in an anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction that is a primary contributing factor for obstructed nasal breathing; and
- Photos clearly document internal and/or external valve collapse as the primary cause of an anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction and are consistent with the clinical exam; and
- Other causes have been ruled out as the primary cause of nasal obstruction (e.g., sinusitis, allergic rhinitis, vasomotor rhinitis, nasal polyposis, adenoid hypertrophy, nasopharyngeal masses, nasal septal deviation, turbinate hypertrophy and choanal atresia).

Septal Dermatoplasty (CPT Code 30620)

Septal Dermatoplasty is considered reconstructive when:

- There is a documented Functional Impairment (e.g., obstruction, pain or bleeding) due to diseased nasal mucosa; and
- The Functional Impairment will be eliminated by a skin graft.

Lysis Intranasal Synechia (CPT Code 30560)

Lysis Intranasal Synechia is considered reconstructive when:

- There is a documented Functional Impairment (e.g., obstruction, pain or bleeding) due to intranasal Synechia (adhesions/scar bands); and
- The Functional Impairment will be eliminated by lysis of the Synechia.

Rhinophyma (CPT Code 30120)

Rhinophyma is considered reconstructive and medically necessary when all of the following criteria are present:

- One of the following:
 - Prolonged, persistent obstructed nasal breathing due to rhinophyma; or
 - Chronic infection or bleeding unresponsive to medical management due to rhinophyma; and
- Photos clearly document rhinophyma as the primary cause of an anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction or chronic infection and are consistent with the clinical exam; and
- The proposed procedure is designed to correct the anatomic Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction and relieve the nasal airway obstruction by correcting the deformity or the proposed procedure is designed to address the chronic infection.

California Only

This is the mandated language for Reconstructive Procedures:

- Reconstructive Procedures to correct or repair abnormal structures of the body caused by congenital defects, developmental abnormalities, trauma, infection, tumors, or disease. Reconstructive Procedures include surgery or other procedures which are associated with an Injury, Sickness or Congenital Anomaly. The primary result of the procedure is not a changed or improved physical appearance for cosmetic purposes only, but rather to improve function and/or create a normal appearance, to the extent possible.

Documentation Requirements

Rhinoplasty or other nasal surgery documentation should include the evaluation and management note for the date of service and the note for the day the decision to perform surgery was made. The member's medical record must contain, and be available for review on request, the following information:

- Physician office notes
- Radiologic imaging if done
- Photographs that document the nasal deformity

Coverage Limitations and Exclusions

Cosmetic Procedures are excluded from coverage, including but not limited to:

- Procedures that correct an anatomical Congenital Anomaly without improving or restoring Physiologic Function are considered Cosmetic Procedures. The fact that a Covered Person may suffer psychological consequences or socially avoidant behavior as a result of an Injury, Sickness or Congenital Anomaly does not classify surgery (or other procedures done to relieve such consequences or behavior) as a Reconstructive Procedure.
- Rhinoplasty, unless rhinoplasty criteria above are met
- Any procedure that does not meet the reconstructive criteria
- Rhinoplasty procedures performed to improve appearance (check member specific benefit plan document)

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions may not apply to all plans. Refer to the member specific benefit plan document for applicable definitions.

Congenital Anomaly: A physical developmental defect that is present at the time of birth, and that is identified within the first twelve months of birth.

Cosmetic Procedures: Procedures or services that change or improve appearance without significantly improving Physiological Function.

Cosmetic Procedures (California only): Procedures or services that are performed to alter or reshape normal structures of the body in order to improve your appearance.

External Nasal Valve: The caudal septum, along with lower lateral cartilage, alar rim, and nostril sill contribute to the external nasal valve.

Functional or Physical or Physiological Impairment: A Functional or Physical or Physiological Impairment causes deviation from the normal function of a tissue or organ. This results in a significantly limited, impaired, or delayed capacity to move, coordinate actions, or perform physical activities and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: physical and motor tasks; independent movement; performing basic life functions.

Mechanical Nasal Airway Obstruction: Trouble breathing through the nose (not snoring) due to a bony or cartilaginous deformity.

Prolonged, Persistent Nasal Airway Obstruction: Trouble breathing through the nose (not snoring) that has not responded to six weeks of medical management such as nasal steroids, antihistamines, and decongestants. Elimination of Rhinitis Medicamentosa as a cause for airway obstruction.

Reconstructive Procedures: Reconstructive Procedures when the primary purpose of the procedure is either of the following:

- Treatment of a medical condition
- Improvement or restoration of physiologic function

Reconstructive Procedures include surgery or other procedures which are related to an Injury, Sickness or Congenital Anomaly. The primary result of the procedure is not a changed or improved physical appearance.

Procedures that correct an anatomical Congenital Anomaly without improving or restoring physiologic function are considered Cosmetic Procedures. The fact that you may suffer psychological consequences or socially avoidant behavior as a result of an Injury, Sickness or Congenital Anomaly does not classify surgery (or other procedures done to relieve such consequences or behavior) as a reconstructive procedure.

Reconstructive Procedures (California only): Reconstructive Procedures to correct or repair abnormal structures of the body caused by congenital defects, developmental abnormalities, trauma, infection, tumors, or disease to do either of the following:

- To improve function
- To create a normal appearance, to the extent possible

Reconstructive Procedures include surgery or other procedures which are associated with a health condition. The primary result of the procedure is not a changed or improved physical appearance for cosmetic purposes only, but rather to improve function and/or to create a normal appearance, to the extent possible. Covered Health Care Services include dental or orthodontic services that are an integral part of reconstructive surgery for cleft palate procedures.

For the purposes of this section, "cleft palate" means a condition that may include cleft palate, cleft lip, or other craniofacial anomalies associated with cleft palate.

Rhinitis Medicamentosa (RM): A condition of rebound nasal congestion brought on by extended use of topical decongestants (e.g., oxymetazoline, phenylephrine, xylometazoline, and naphazoline nasal sprays) and certain oral medications (e.g., sympathomimetic amines and various 2-imidazolines) that constrict blood vessels in the lining of the nose.

Septal Dermatoplasty: The physician removes diseased intranasal mucosa and replaces it with a separately reportable split thickness graft. The surgery is performed on one nasal side. A lateral rhinotomy is made to expose the intranasal mucosa. The diseased mucosal tissue is excised from the septum, nasal floor, and anterior aspect of the inferior turbinate. A split thickness graft is sutured to the recipient bed, covering the exposed cartilage and submucosal surfaces. Gauze packing and splints are placed in the grafted nasal cavity.

Synechia: An adhesion of parts, typically the nasal side wall to the septum.

APPLICABLE CODES

The following list(s) of procedure and/or diagnosis codes is provided for reference purposes only and may not be all inclusive. Listing of a code in this guideline does not imply that the service described by the code is a covered or non-covered health service. Benefit coverage for health services is determined by the member specific benefit plan document and applicable laws that may require coverage for a specific service. The inclusion of a code does not imply any right to reimbursement or guarantee claim payment. Other Policies and Coverage Determination Guidelines may apply.

Note: All nasal surgical claims may be subject to coding review. The following codes may be cosmetic; review is required to determine if considered cosmetic or reconstructive.

CPT Code	Description
Rhinoplasty	
30400	Rhinoplasty, primary; lateral and alar cartilages and/or elevation of nasal tip
30410	Rhinoplasty, primary; complete, external parts including bony pyramid, lateral and alar cartilages, and/or elevation of nasal tip
30420	Rhinoplasty, primary; including major septal repair
30430	Rhinoplasty, secondary; minor revision (small amount of nasal tip work)
30435	Rhinoplasty, secondary; intermediate revision (bony work with osteotomies)
30450	Rhinoplasty, secondary; major revision (nasal tip work and osteotomies)
30460	Rhinoplasty for nasal deformity secondary to congenital cleft lip and/or palate, including columellar lengthening; tip only
30462	Rhinoplasty for nasal deformity secondary to congenital cleft lip and/or palate, including columellar lengthening; tip, septum, osteotomies

CPT Code	Description
Repair of Vestibular Stenosis	
30465	Repair of nasal vestibular stenosis (e.g., spreader grafting, lateral nasal wall reconstruction)
Lysis Intranasal Synechia	
30560	Lysis intranasal synechia
Septal Dermatoplasty	
30620	Septal or other intranasal dermatoplasty (does not include obtaining graft)
Rhinophyma	
30120	Excision or surgical planing of skin of nose for rhinophyma

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GUIDELINE HISTORY/REVISION INFORMATION

Date	Action/Description
04/01/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganized policy template: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Simplified and relocated <i>Instructions for Use</i> ○ Removed <i>Benefit Considerations</i> section • Updated definitions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Removed definition of "Congenital Anomaly (California only)" ○ Modified definition of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cosmetic Procedures (California only) ▪ Reconstructive Procedures (California only) • Updated list of applicable CPT codes; added notation to clarify the listed codes may be cosmetic and review is required to determine if [the services] are considered cosmetic or reconstructive • Updated supporting information; replaced reference to "MCG™ Care Guidelines, 22nd edition, 2018" with "MCG™ Care Guidelines, 23rd edition, 2019" • Archived previous policy version CDG.019.11

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

This Coverage Determination Guideline provides assistance in interpreting UnitedHealthcare standard benefit plans. When deciding coverage, the member specific benefit plan document must be referenced as the terms of the member specific benefit plan may differ from the standard plan. In the event of a conflict, the member specific benefit plan document governs. Before using this guideline, please check the member specific benefit plan document and any applicable federal or state mandates. UnitedHealthcare reserves the right to modify its Policies and Guidelines as necessary. This Coverage Determination Guideline is provided for informational purposes. It does not constitute medical advice.

This Coverage Determination Guideline may also be applied to Medicare Advantage plans in certain instances. In the absence of a Medicare National Coverage Determination (NCD), Local Coverage Determination (LCD), or other Medicare coverage guidance, CMS allows a Medicare Advantage Organization (MAO) to create its own coverage determinations, using objective evidence-based rationale relying on authoritative evidence ([Medicare IOM Pub. No. 100-16, Ch. 4, §90.5](#)).

UnitedHealthcare may also use tools developed by third parties, such as the MCG™ Care Guidelines, to assist us in administering health benefits. UnitedHealthcare Coverage Determination Guidelines are intended to be used in connection with the independent professional medical judgment of a qualified health care provider and do not constitute the practice of medicine or medical advice.

For self-funded plans with SPD language other than fully-insured Generic COC language, please refer to the member specific benefit plan document for coverage.