CHELATION THERAPY FOR TREATMENT OF ATHEROSCLEROSIS (NCD 20.21)

Guideline Number: MPG048.04

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines are applicable to UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage Plans offered by UnitedHealthcare and its affiliates.

These Policy Guidelines are provided for informational purposes and do not constitute medical advice. Treating physicians and healthcare providers are solely responsible for determining what care to provide to their patients. Members should always consult their physician before making any decisions about medical care.

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 member specific benefit plan document identifies which services are covered, which are excluded, and which are subject to limitations. In the event of a conflict, the member specific benefit plan document supersedes the Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines.

Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines are developed as needed, are regularly reviewed and updated, and are subject to change. They represent a portion of the resources used to support UnitedHealthcare coverage decision making. UnitedHealthcare may modify these Policy Guidelines at any time by publishing a new version of the policy on this website. Medicare source materials used to develop these guidelines include, but are not limited to, CMS National Coverage Determinations (NCDs), Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs), Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Medicare Claims Processing Manual, Medicare Program Integrity Manual, Medicare Managed Care Manual, etc. The information presented in the Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines is believed to be accurate and current as of the date of publication, and is provided on an "AS IS" basis. Where there is a conflict between this document and Medicare source materials, the Medicare source materials will apply.

You are responsible for submission of accurate claims. Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines are intended to ensure that coverage decisions are made accurately based on the code or codes that correctly describe the health care services provided. UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines use Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®)**, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), or other coding guidelines. References to CPT® or other sources are for definitional purposes only and do not imply any right to reimbursement or guarantee claims payment.

Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines are the property of UnitedHealthcare. Unauthorized copying, use and distribution of this information are strictly prohibited.

*For more information on a specific member's benefit coverage, please call the customer service number on the back of the member ID card or refer to the Administrative Guide.

**CPT® is a registered trademark of the American Medical Association.

PURPOSE

The Medicare Advantage Policy Guideline documents are generally used to support UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage claims processing activities and facilitate providers’ submission of accurate claims for the specified services. The document can be used as a guide to help determine applicable:

- Related Medicare Advantage Coverage Summary
  - Chelation Therapy
Chelation therapy is the application of chelation techniques for the therapeutic or preventive effects of removing unwanted metal ions from the body.

Guidelines
The application of chelation therapy using ethylenediamine-tetra-acetic acid (EDTA) for the treatment and prevention of atherosclerosis is controversial. There is no widely accepted rationale to explain the beneficial effects attributed to this therapy. Its safety is questioned and its clinical effectiveness has never been established by well designed, controlled clinical trials. It is not widely accepted and practiced by American physicians. EDTA chelation therapy for atherosclerosis is considered experimental. For these reasons, EDTA chelation therapy for the treatment or prevention of atherosclerosis is not covered.

Some practitioners refer to this therapy as chemoendarterectomy and may also show a diagnosis other than atherosclerosis, such as arteriosclerosis or calcinosis. Claims employing such variant terms should also be denied under this section.

Cross Reference: NCD 20.22 Ethylenediamine-Tetra-Acetic (EDTA) Chelation Therapy for Treatment of Atherosclerosis

Chelation therapy can be medically necessary when clinically indicated for diseases/disorders such as cystinuria; secondary hemochromatosis (due to iron overload from multiple transfusions), and Wilson’s disease. It can be medically necessary for heavy metal poisoning (such as arsenic, cadmium, copper, gold, iron, lead, and mercury) when the patient has specific signs and symptoms of heavy metal toxicity and/or a history of likely exposure to heavy metals with standard of care laboratory confirmation.

Applicable Codes
The following list(s) of 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 Guidelines may apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HCPCS Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J0470</td>
<td>Injection, dimercaprol, per 100 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J0600</td>
<td>Injection, edetate calcium disodium, up to 1,000 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J0895</td>
<td>Injection, deferoxamine mesylate, 500 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M0300</td>
<td>IV chelation therapy (chemical endarterectomy) (Not Covered)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ICD-10 Diagnosis Codes

References

CMS National Coverage Determinations (NCDs)
NCD 20.21 Chelation Therapy for Treatment of Atherosclerosis
Related NCD: [NCD 20.22 Ethylenediamine-Tetra-Acetic (EDTA) Chelation Therapy for Treatment of Atherosclerosis](#)

### CMS Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LCD</th>
<th>Medicare Part A</th>
<th>Medicare Part B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L33809 (Chelation Therapy) First Coast <a href="#">Retired 08/11/2017</a></td>
<td>FL, PR, VI</td>
<td>FL, PR, VI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CMS Benefit Policy Manual
- [Chapter 15: § 50 Drugs and Biologicals](#)

### UnitedHealthcare Commercial Policies
- [Chelation Therapy for Non-Overload Conditions](#)

### GUIDELINE HISTORY/REVISION INFORMATION

Revisions to this summary document do not in any way modify the requirement that services be provided and documented in accordance with the Medicare guidelines in effect on the date of service in question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/14/2018</td>
<td>• Annual review for MAPG Committee presentation and approval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>