

The Pritikin Program (NCD 20.31.1)

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[➔ Terms and Conditions](#)

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Related Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines

- [Cardiac Rehabilitation Program for Chronic Heart Failure \(NCD 20.10.1\)](#)
- [Intensive Cardiac Rehabilitation \(ICR\) Programs \(NCD 20.31\)](#)

Related Medicare Advantage Coverage Summary

- [Rehabilitation: Cardiac Rehabilitation Services \(Outpatient\)](#)

Policy Summary

[➔ See Purpose](#)

Overview

The Pritikin diet was designed and adopted by Nathan Pritikin in 1955. The diet was modeled after the diet of the Tarahumara Indians in Mexico, which consisted of 10% fat, 13% protein, 75-80% carbohydrates and provided 15-20 grams per day of crude fiber with only 75 mg/day of cholesterol. Over the years, the Pritikin Program (also known as the Pritikin Longevity Program) evolved into a comprehensive program that is provided in a physician’s office and incorporates a specific diet (10%-15% of calories from fat, 15%-20% from protein, 65%-75% from complex carbohydrates), exercise and counseling lasting 21-26 days. An optional residential component is also available for participants.

Guidelines

Nationally Covered Indications

Effective for claims with dates of service on and after August 12, 2010, the Pritikin Program meets the intensive cardiac rehabilitation (ICR) program requirements set forth by Congress in §1861(eee) (4) (A) of the Social Security Act and in regulations at 42 C.F.R. §410.49(c) and, as such, has been included on the list of approved ICR programs available at <http://www.cms.gov/MedicareApprovedFacilitie/>.

Nationally Non-Covered Indications

Effective August 12, 2010, if a specific ICR program is not included on the list as a Medicare-approved ICR program, it is non-covered.

Note: See NCD 20.31 Intensive Cardiac Rehabilitation (ICR) Program for complete coding and billing guidelines.

References

CMS National Coverage Determinations (NCDs)

[NCD 20.31.1 The Pritikin Program](#)

Reference NCD: [NCD 20.31 Intensive Cardiac Rehabilitation \(ICR\) Programs](#)

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.

Date	Summary of Changes
04/01/2021	Template Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reformatted policy; transferred content to new template
05/13/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Routine review; no change to guidelines Supporting Information <ul style="list-style-type: none">Archived previous policy version MPG302.05

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:

- Medicare coding or billing requirements, and/or
- Medical necessity coverage guidelines; including documentation requirements.

UnitedHealthcare follows Medicare guidelines such as NCDs, LCDs, LCAs, and other Medicare manuals for the purposes of determining coverage. It is expected providers retain or have access to appropriate documentation when requested to support coverage. Please utilize the links in the [References](#) section below to view the Medicare source materials used to develop this resource document. This document is not a replacement for the Medicare source materials that outline Medicare coverage requirements. Where there is a conflict between this document and Medicare source materials, the Medicare source materials will apply.

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.

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*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](#).