

Treatment of Psoriasis (NCD 250.1)

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[↪ Terms and Conditions](#)

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Related Medicare Advantage Coverage Summary	
•	Skin Treatment, Services and Procedures

Policy Summary

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Overview

Psoriasis is a chronic skin disease, for which several conventional methods of treatment have been recognized as covered. These include topical application of steroids or other drugs; ultraviolet light (actinotherapy); and coal tar alone or in combination with ultraviolet B light (Goeckerman treatment).

A newer treatment for psoriasis uses a psoralen derivative drug in combination with ultraviolet A light, known as PUVA. PUVA therapy is covered for treatment of intractable, disabling psoriasis, but only after the psoriasis has not responded to more conventional treatment. The Medicare Administrative Contractor should document this before paying for PUVA therapy.

Guidelines

Reimbursement for PUVA therapy should be limited to amounts paid for other types of photochemotherapy; ordinarily, payment should not be allowed for more than 30 days of treatment, unless improvement is documented.

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 Guidelines may apply.

CPT Code	Description
96910	Photochemotherapy; tar and ultraviolet B (Goeckerman treatment) or petrolatum and ultraviolet B
96912	Photochemotherapy; psoralens and ultraviolet A (PUVA)
96913	Photochemotherapy (Goeckerman and/or PUVA) for severe photo responsive dermatoses requiring at least 4-8 hours of care under direct supervision of the physician (includes application of medication and dressings)
96920	Laser treatment for inflammatory skin disease (psoriasis); total area less than 250 sq. cm

CPT Code	Description
96921	Laser treatment for inflammatory skin disease (psoriasis); 250 sq. cm to 500 sq. cm
96922	Laser treatment for inflammatory skin disease (psoriasis); over 500 sq. cm

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References

CMS National Coverage Determinations (NCDs)

[NCD 250.1 Treatment of Psoriasis](#)

CMS Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) and Articles

LCD	Article	Contractor	Medicare Part A	Medicare Part B
L33918 Laser Treatment for Psoriasis First Coast Retired 03/11/2020	N/A	First Coast	FL, PR, VI	FL, PR, VI

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
12/09/2020	Supporting Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated <i>References</i> section to reflect the most current information; no change to guidelines Archived previous policy version MPG329.05

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.

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](#).