



MASSACHUSETTS

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Medical Policy

Ultrasonographic Evaluation of Skin Lesions

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Policy Number: 303

BCBSA Reference Number: 2.01.59

Related Policies

- Dermatoscopy #519

Policy

Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, and Indemnity Medicare HMO BlueSM and Medicare PPO BlueSM Members

Ultrasonographic evaluation of skin lesions is **INVESTIGATIONAL**.

Ultrasonographic evaluation as a technique to assess photo-aging or skin rejuvenation techniques is considered cosmetic in nature, and therefore is **NOT MEDICALLY NECESSARY**.

Prior Authorization Information

Pre-service approval is required for all inpatient services for all products.

See below for situations where prior authorization may be required or may not be required for outpatient services.

Yes indicates that prior authorization is required.

No indicates that prior authorization is not required.

N/A indicates that this service is primarily performed in an inpatient setting.

Outpatient

Commercial Managed Care (HMO and POS)	This is not a covered service.
Commercial PPO and Indemnity	This is not a covered service.
Medicare HMO BlueSM	This is not a covered service.
Medicare PPO BlueSM	This is not a covered service.

CPT Codes / HCPCS Codes / ICD-9 Codes

The following codes are included below for informational purposes. Inclusion or exclusion of a code does not constitute or imply member coverage or provider reimbursement. Please refer to the member's

contract benefits in effect at the time of service to determine coverage or non-coverage as it applies to an individual member.

Providers should report all services using the most up-to-date industry-standard procedure, revenue, and diagnosis codes, including modifiers where applicable.

CPT Codes

There is no specific CPT code for this service.

ICD-9 Diagnosis Codes

Investigational for all diagnoses.

Description

Ultrasonographic evaluation of skin lesions refers to the use of ultrasound to determine the margins and depth of surface tumors or inflammatory skin conditions. Ultrasound transducers of at least 20 MHz are used.

The following applications of ultrasonographic evaluation have been proposed:

- To assess the margins and depth of melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers to aid in surgical planning,
- To assess actinic keratoses to determine if cryosurgery is an appropriate therapeutic option,
- To follow the course of connective diseases of the skin (i.e., scleroderma) by evaluating the amount and location of collagen in the dermis, and
- To assess inflammatory skin diseases, such as allergic reactions or psoriasis.

Examples of ultrasonographic evaluations of skin lesions include the Episcan® I-200 Ultrasound System from Longport, Inc. and the DermaScan™ C Ultrasonic System from Cortex Technology. All ultrasonographic evaluations of skin lesions are considered investigational or not medically necessary regardless of the commercial name, the manufacturer or FDA approval status.

Summary

The evidence is insufficient for determining whether the use of ultrasound leads to improved health outcomes in patients with skin lesions. No identified study examined whether the use of ultrasonography preoperatively resulted in improved health outcomes, such as lower rates of disease recurrence or increased survival. Given the lack of sufficient high-quality evidence on the impact of ultrasound skin imaging on patient management, this technology is considered investigational.

In addition, due to the cosmetic nature of the application, ultrasound skin imaging is considered not medically necessary to assess photoaging or skin rejuvenation techniques.

Policy History

Date	Action
11/2011-4/2012	Medical policy ICD 10 remediation: Formatting, editing and coding updates. No changes to policy statements.
1/12/2011	New policy, effective 1/12/2011 describing ongoing non-coverage.

Information Pertaining to All Blue Cross Blue Shield Medical Policies

Click on any of the following terms to access the relevant information:

[Medical Policy Terms of Use](#)

[Managed Care Guidelines](#)

[Indemnity/PPO Guidelines](#)

[Clinical Exception Process](#)

[Medical Technology Assessment Guidelines](#)

References

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