



# MASSACHUSETTS

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## Medical Policy

### Melanoma Vaccines

#### Table of Contents

- [Policy: Commercial](#)
- [Policy: Medicare](#)
- [Authorization Information](#)
- [Coding Information](#)
- [Description](#)
- [Policy History](#)
- [Information Pertaining to All Policies](#)
- [References](#)

#### Policy Number: 453

BCBSA Reference Number: 2.03.04A

NCD/LCD: N/A

#### Related Policies

Adoptive Immunotherapy, #[455](#)

#### Policy

**Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, and Indemnity Medicare HMO Blue<sup>SM</sup> and Medicare PPO Blue<sup>SM</sup> Members**

Melanoma vaccines are considered [INVESTIGATIONAL](#).

#### Prior Authorization Information

##### Inpatient

- For services described in this policy, precertification/preauthorization **IS REQUIRED** for all products if the procedure is performed **inpatient**.

##### Outpatient

- For services described in this policy, see below for products where prior authorization **might be required** if the procedure is performed **outpatient**.

	Outpatient
<b>Commercial Managed Care (HMO and POS)</b>	This is <b>not</b> a covered service.
<b>Commercial PPO and Indemnity</b>	This is <b>not</b> a covered service.
<b>Medicare HMO Blue<sup>SM</sup></b>	This is <b>not</b> a covered service.
<b>Medicare PPO Blue<sup>SM</sup></b>	This is <b>not</b> a covered service.

#### CPT Codes / HCPCS Codes / ICD Codes

*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.

## Description

Tumor vaccines are a type of active immunotherapy that attempts to stimulate the patient's own immune system to respond to tumor antigens. Melanoma has been viewed as a particularly promising tumor for this type of treatment because of its immunologic features, which include the prognostic importance of lymphocytic infiltrate at the primary tumor site, the expression of a wide variety of antigens, and the occasional occurrence of spontaneous remissions. Melanoma vaccines can be generally categorized or prepared in a variety of ways.

## Summary

Despite considerable interest and numerous studies over the past 20 years, to date no melanoma vaccine has been shown to demonstrate safety and efficacy in a well-controlled published Phase III clinical trial and no vaccine treatment for this cancer has been approved by FDA. A wide range of vaccine choices are available including use of autologous tumor cells, allogeneic tumor cells, and tumor-specific moieties including peptides, gangliosides, and DNA plasmids. A variety of mechanisms appear to exist as possible obstacles to successful active immunotherapy using vaccines. Current studies are focused on the use of new and different vaccine preparations, as well as on various forms of immune-modulation as potential techniques for enhancing vaccine effectiveness.

## Policy History

Date	Action
2/2020	Policy updated with literature review through February 1, 2020, no references added. Policy statements unchanged.
7/2015	New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.
6/2013	New references from BCBSA National medical policy.
11/2011-4/2012	Medical policy ICD 10 remediation: Formatting, editing and coding updates. No changes to policy statements.
1/17/2012	BCBSA National medical policy review. No changes to policy statements.
7/2011	Reviewed - Medical Policy Group - Hematology and Oncology. No changes to policy statements.
9/2010	Reviewed - Medical Policy Group - Hematology and Oncology. No changes to policy statements.
4/2010	BCBSA National medical policy review. No changes to policy statements.
9/2009	Reviewed - Medical Policy Group - Hematology and Oncology. No changes to policy statements.
10/2008	Reviewed - Medical Policy Group - Hematology and Oncology. No changes to policy statements.
9/2008	BCBSA National medical policy review. No changes to policy statements.
11/2007	BCBSA National medical policy review. No changes to policy statements.

## 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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