Medical Policy

In Vivo Analysis of Colorectal Polyps

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Policy Number: 521
BCBSA Reference Number: 2.01.51A
NCD/LCD: NA

Related Policies
None

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

In vivo analysis of colorectal polyps is 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.

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<tr>
<th>Commercial Managed Care (HMO and POS)</th>
<th>Outpatient</th>
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<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
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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**
Identification of premalignant lesions is considered one of the cornerstones of colorectal cancer prevention. While hyperplastic polyps are considered benign without malignant potential, adenomatous polyps are thought to represent one of the earliest stages in the progression to a malignancy. Techniques have been developed as adjuncts to colonoscopy that are intended to distinguish between normal and precancerous tissue.

The first system developed was based on the observation that benign and malignant tissues emit different patterns and wavelengths of fluorescence after exposure to a laser light. One such device consists of an optical fiber emitting a laser that is directed against three different regions of the same polyp. The subsequent fluorescent signal is collected, measured, and analyzed by a proprietary system software, and classifies a polyp as “suspicious” (i.e., adenomatous) or “not suspicious” (i.e., hyperplastic).

Narrow band imaging (NBI) is another technique that allows visualization of the mucosal surface and capillary vessels and thus may assist in the differentiation of abnormal from normal mucosa during colonoscopy.

Examples of devices for in vivo analysis of colorectal polyps include the Optical Biopsy System from Spectra Science and the EVIS EXERA 160A System from Olympus Medical Systems Corp. All devices for in vivo analysis of colorectal polyps are considered investigational regardless of the commercial name, the manufacturer or FDA approval status.

**Summary**
The pivotal question is whether any in vivo analysis of colorectal polyps is superior to established colorectal screening procedures. Randomized trial data, in which participants receive both in vivo and standard screening tests, and histologic confirmation of disease is matched to screening test results for each polyp are required to evaluate this technology. These studies have not been done. Since the impact of this technology on health outcomes is not known, it is considered investigational.

**Policy History**

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<tr>
<td>02/2020</td>
<td>Policy updated with literature review through February 1, 2020, references added. Policy statements unchanged.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/2011-4/2012</td>
<td>Medical policy ICD 10 remediation: Formatting, editing and coding updates. No changes to policy statements</td>
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**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