Medical Policy

In Vivo Analysis of Colorectal Polyps

Table of Contents

- Policy: Commercial
- Coding Information
- Information Pertaining to All Policies
- Policy: Medicare
- Description
- References
- Authorization Information
- Policy History

Policy Number: 521
BCBSA Reference Number: 2.01.5

Related Policies
None

Policy

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

In vivo analysis of colorectal polyps is INVESTIGATIONAL.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outpatient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Managed Care (HMO and POS)</td>
<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial PPO and Indemnity</td>
<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
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<td>Medicare HMO Blue℠</td>
<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicare PPO Blue℠</td>
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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.

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 SpectraScience 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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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


