Medical Policy

**Measurement of Lipoprotein-Associated Phospholipase A2 - Lp-PLA2 - in the Assessment of Cardiovascular Risk**

**Table of Contents**
- Policy: Commercial
- Policy: Medicare
- Authorization Information
- Coding Information
- Description
- Policy History
- Information Pertaining to All Policies
- References

**Policy Number:** 558

BCBSA Reference Number: 2.04.32
NCD/LCD: NA

**Related Policies**
- Novel Lipid Risk Factors in Risk Assessment and Management of Cardiovascular Disease, #283
- Homocysteine Testing in the Screening, Diagnosis, and Management of Cardiovascular Disease and Venous Thromboembolic Disease #016

**Policy**

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

**Medicare HMO BlueSM and Medicare PPO BlueSM Members**

Measurement of lipoprotein-associated phospholipase A2 (Lp-PLA2) is 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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPT codes</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>83698</td>
<td>Lipoprotein-associated phospholipase A2 (Lp-PLA2)</td>
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</table>

Description

Low-Density Lipoproteins

LDLs have been identified as major atherogenic lipoproteins and have long been identified by the National Cholesterol Education Project as the primary target of cholesterol lowering therapy. LDL particles consist of a surface coat composed of phospholipids, free cholesterol, and apolipoproteins surrounding an inner lipid core composed of cholesterol ester and triglycerides. Traditional lipid risk factors such as low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, while predictive on a population basis, are weaker markers of risk on an individual basis. Only a minority of subjects with elevated LDL and cholesterol levels will develop clinical disease, and up to 50% of cases of coronary artery disease (CAD) occur in subjects with "normal" levels of total and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol.

Treatment

Although treatment for elevated coronary disease risk with statins targets cholesterol levels, selection for treatment involves estimation of future CAD risk using well-validated prediction models that use additional variables.

Lipoprotein-associated phospholipase A2 (Lp-PLA2), also known as platelet-activating factor acetylhydrolase, is an enzyme that hydrolyzes phospholipids and is primarily associated with LDLs. Accumulating evidence has suggested that Lp-PLA2 is a biomarker of CAD and may have a proinflammatory role in the progression of atherosclerosis. Recognition that atherosclerosis represents, in part, an inflammatory process has created considerable interest in the measurement of proinflammatory factors as part of cardiovascular disease risk assessment.

Interest in Lp-PLA2 as a possible causal risk factor for CAD has generated development and testing of Lp-PLA2 inhibitors as a new class of drugs to reduce the risk of CAD. However, clinical trials of Lp-PLA2 inhibitors have not shown significant reductions in CAD endpoints.\(^1,2,3\) Furthermore, assessment of Lp-PLA2 levels has not been used in the selection or management of subjects in the clinical trials.

Summary

Lipoprotein-associated phospholipase A2 (Lp-PLA2), also known as platelet-activating factor acetylhydrolase, is an enzyme that hydrolyzes phospholipids and is primarily associated with low-density lipoproteins. Accumulating evidence has suggested that Lp-PLA2 is a biomarker of coronary artery disease and may have a proinflammatory role in the progression of atherosclerosis.

For individuals who have a risk of cardiovascular disease who receive Lp-PLA2 testing, the evidence includes studies of the association between Lp-PLA2 and various coronary artery disease outcomes. The relevant outcomes are overall survival, disease-specific survival, and test validity. The studies have demonstrated that Lp-PLA2 levels are an independent predictor of cardiovascular disease. Although Lp-PLA2 levels are associated with cardiovascular disease risk, changes in patient management that would occur as a result of obtaining Lp-PLA2 levels in practice are not well-defined. To demonstrate clinical utility, clinicians must have the tools to incorporate Lp-PLA2 test results into existing
risk prediction models that improve classification into risk categories alter treatment decisions and lead to improved health outcomes. Direct evidence for such improved health outcomes with Lp-PLA2 testing in clinical practice is lacking. The evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

**Policy History**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/2018</td>
<td>New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2017</td>
<td>New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/2014</td>
<td>New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/2013</td>
<td>New references from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/20/2010</td>
<td>New policy, effective 10/20/2010 describing ongoing non-coverage.</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**


33. Rosenson RS. Fenofibrate reduces lipoprotein associated phospholipase A2 mass and oxidative lipids in hypertriglyceridemic subjects with the metabolic syndrome. Am Heart J. Mar 2008;155(3):499 e499-416. PMID 18294485