Medical Policy

Artificial Intervertebral Disc: Lumbar Spine

Table of Contents

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

Policy Number: 592
BCBSA Reference Number: 7.01.87
NCD/LCD: National Coverage Determination (NCD) for Lumbar Artificial Disc Replacement (LADR) (150.10)

Related Policies
- Artificial Intervertebral Disc: Cervical Spine, #585

Policy

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

Artificial intervertebral discs of the lumbar spine are considered INVESTIGATIONAL.

Medicare HMO BlueSM and Medicare PPO BlueSM Members

BCBSMA does not cover lumbar artificial intervertebral disc replacement for Medicare HMO Blue and Medicare PPO Blue members in accordance with CMS NCD.

National Coverage Determination (NCD) for Lumbar Artificial Disc Replacement (LADR) (150.10)

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. |
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.

The following codes are included below for informational purposes only; this is not an all-inclusive list.

CPT Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPT codes:</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22857</td>
<td>Total disc arthroplasty (artificial disc), anterior approach, including discectomy to prepare interspace (other than for decompression), single interspace, lumbar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22862</td>
<td>Revision including replacement of total disc arthroplasty (artificial disc), anterior approach, single interspace; lumbar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0163T</td>
<td>Total disc arthroplasty (artificial disc), anterior approach, including discectomy to prepare interspace (other than for decompression), each additional interspace, lumbar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0164T</td>
<td>Removal of total disc arthroplasty (artificial disc), anterior approach, each additional interspace, lumbar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0165T</td>
<td>Revision including replacement of total disc arthroplasty, anterior approach, each additional interspace, lumbar</td>
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Description

When conservative treatment of degenerative disc disease (DDD) fails, a common surgical approach is spinal fusion. More than 200,000 spinal fusions are performed each year. However, outcomes with spinal fusion have been controversial, in part due to the difficulty in determining if a patient’s back pain is related to DDD and in part due to the success of the procedure itself. In addition, spinal fusion alters the spine biomechanics, potentially leading to premature disc degeneration at adjacent levels, a particular concern for younger patients. During the past 30 years, various artificial intervertebral discs have been investigated as an alternative approach to fusion. This approach, also referred to as total disc replacement or spinal arthroplasty, is intended to maintain motion at the operative level once the damaged disc has been removed and normal biomechanics of the adjacent vertebrae.

Potential candidates for artificial disc replacement have chronic low back pain attributed to DDD, lack of improvement with nonoperative treatment, and none of the contraindications for the procedure, which include multilevel disease, spinal stenosis, spondylolisthesis, scoliosis, previous major spine surgery, neurologic symptoms, and other minor contraindications. These contraindications make artificial disc replacement suitable for a subset of patients for whom fusion is indicated. Patients who require procedures in addition to fusion (eg, laminectomy, decompression) are not candidates for the artificial disc.

Use of a motion-preserving artificial disc increases the potential for various types of implant failure. They include device failure (device fracture, dislocation, or wear), bone-implant interface failure (subsidence, dislocation-migration, vertebral body fracture), and host response to the implant (osteolysis, heterotopic ossification, pseudotumor formation).

Summary

Total disc replacement, using an artificial intervertebral disc designed for the lumbar spine, is proposed as an alternative to spinal fusion in patients with degenerative disc disease leading to disabling symptoms.
For individuals who have lumbar degenerative disc disease who receive a lumbar artificial intervertebral disc, the evidence includes randomized controlled trials (RCTs) with 5-year outcomes and case series with longer term outcomes. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, functional outcomes, quality of life, and treatment-related morbidity. Five-year outcomes for the ProDisc-L RCT have provided evidence for the noninferiority of artificial disc replacement. The superiority of ProDisc-L with circumferential fusion was achieved at 2 but not at 5 years in this unblinded trial. The potential benefits of the artificial disc (eg, faster recovery, reduced adjacent-level disc degeneration) have not been demonstrated. In addition, considerable uncertainty remains whether response rates will continue to decline over longer time periods and long-term complications with these implants will emerge. Although some randomized trials have concluded that this technology is noninferior to spinal fusion, outcomes that would make noninferiority sufficient to demonstrate the clinical benefit of the artificial lumbar disc have not been established. 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>6/2017</td>
<td>BCBSA National medical policy review. Discussion of artificial discs not available in the United States was removed. Policy statement unchanged. 6/1/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/2016</td>
<td>New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2015</td>
<td>New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.</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**


