Medical Policy

Intracavitary Balloon Catheter Brain Brachytherapy for Malignant Gliomas or Metastasis to the Brain

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Policy Number: 602
BCBSA Reference Number: 8.01.45
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

Intracavitary balloon catheter brain brachytherapy is Investigational, alone or as part of a multimodality treatment regimen, for:
- Primary or recurrent malignant brain tumors, or
- Metastasis to the brain from primary solid tumors outside the brain.

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>
<th>Commercial Managed Care (HMO and POS)</th>
<th>This is not a covered service.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial PPO and Indemnity</td>
<td>Commercial PPO and Indemnity</td>
<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicare HMO BlueSM</td>
<td>Medicare PPO BlueSM</td>
<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
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</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
There is no specific CPT code for this service.

Description
Diffuse fibrillary astrocytoma is the most common glial brain tumor in adults. It is classified histologically into 3 grades: grade II astrocytoma, grade III anaplastic astrocytoma, and grade IV glioblastoma multiforme (GBM). Oligodendrogliomas (ODG) are diffuse neoplasms closely related to diffuse fibrillary astrocytomas clinically and biologically. However, these tumors generally have better prognoses than diffuse astrocytomas. Recurrence is common after surgery for malignant gliomas, even if followed by chemoradiotherapy, because the tumors are usually diffusely infiltrating and develop resistance to chemotherapy; also, neurotoxicity limits cumulative doses of whole-brain radiation.

Intracranial metastases are a frequent occurrence seen at autopsy in 10–30% of deaths from cancer. Surgical resection followed by whole-brain radiation therapy (WBRT) is the mainstay of treatment for patients with 1 to 3 operable brain metastases and with adequate performance status and control of extracranial disease. Although adding WBRT to resection does not increase overall survival duration, it reduces local and distant recurrence of brain metastases.

Intracavitary balloon catheter brain brachytherapy is localized radiation therapy in the brain that requires placement of an inflatable balloon catheter in the surgical cavity, before closing the craniotomy of a resection, to remove or debulk a malignant brain mass. A radiation source is then placed in the balloon to expose surrounding brain tissue to radiation, either continuously or in a series of brief treatments. After the patient completes therapy, the radiation source is permanently removed and the balloon catheter is surgically explanted.

An example of a device for intracavitary balloon catheter brachytherapy in the brain is the GliaSite® radiation therapy system (GliaSite® RTS) from Cytyc Corp. All devices for intracavitary balloon catheter brachytherapy in the brain are considered investigational regardless of the commercial name, the manufacturer or FDA approval status.

Summary
To date, no standard medical care is established for primary brain malignancies or brain metastases of solid tumors, and there are no clinical data available to provide convincing evidence that intracavitary balloon brachytherapy extends the duration of survival, time-to-relapse, quality of life, or time-to-progression. Therefore, the use of intracavitary balloon brachytherapy for brain cancer and brain metastases of solid tumors is investigational.

Policy History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/2017</td>
<td>New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/2014</td>
<td>New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/2013</td>
<td>New references from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1/2012</td>
<td>New policy, effective 1/1/2012, 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:
References