Automated Point of Care Nerve Conduction Tests

Policy

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

Automated nerve conduction tests are INVESTIGATIONAL.

Prior Authorization Information

Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS)
This is NOT a covered service.

Commercial Members: PPO, and Indemnity
This is NOT a covered service.

Medicare Members: HMO Blue®SM
This is NOT a covered service.

Medicare Members: PPO Blue®SM
This is NOT a covered service.
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

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<tr>
<th>CPT codes</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>95905</td>
<td>Motor and/or sensory nerve conduction, using preconfigured electrode array(s),</td>
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<td></td>
<td>amplitude and latency/velocity study, each limb, includes F-wave study when</td>
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<td>performed, with interpretation and report</td>
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ICD-9 Diagnosis Codes

Investigational for all diagnoses.

Description

Portable devices have been developed to provide point-of-care nerve conduction studies. These devices have computational algorithms that are able to drive stimulus delivery, measure and analyze the response, and provide a report of study results. Automated nerve conduction could be used in various settings, including primary care, without the need for specialized training or equipment.

Nerve conduction studies and needle electromyography are considered the gold standard of electrodiagnostic testing. However, the need for specialized equipment and personnel may limit the availability of electrodiagnostic testing for some patients. One proposed use of automated nerve conduction devices is to assist in the diagnosis of carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS). CTS is a pressure-induced entrapment neuropathy of the median nerve as it passes through the carpal tunnel, resulting in sensorimotor disturbances. Electrodiagnostic studies may also be used to confirm the presence or absence of a median neuropathy at the wrist, assess the severity of the neuropathy, and assess alternate associated diagnoses. Nerve conduction is typically assessed prior to surgical release of the carpal tunnel, but the use of electromyography in the diagnosis of CTS is controversial.

Point-of-care nerve conduction testing has also been proposed for the diagnosis of peripheral neuropathy and, in particular, for detecting neuropathy in patients with diabetes.

Examples of portable nerve conduction test devices include NC-stat® from NeuroMetrix, the Neurometer from Neurotron and the ADVANCE™ system from NeuroMetrix. All point of care nerve conduction tests are considered investigational regardless of the commercial name, the manufacturer or FDA approval status.

Summary

Studies have shown the correlation of portable automated nerve conduction test results with standard testing; however, questions remain about the diagnostic performance and clinical utility (i.e., impact on outcomes) of point-of-care automated testing. Particularly needed are data on the sensitivity and specificity of automated nerve conduction tests performed by non-specialists at the point-of-care in
comparison with the “gold standard” of laboratory NCS/EMG. One recent study at a tertiary care clinic found high sensitivity but low specificity for the diagnosis of lumbosacral radiculopathy. Another potential clinical use could be early identification of asymptomatic diabetic neuropathy to institute-appropriate clinical management before the onset of ulcerations, but no studies were identified that assessed the influence of point-of-care nerve conduction tests on clinical outcomes in this population. There is no peer-reviewed published medical literature on the use of voltage-actuated sensory nerve conduction tests and their impact on clinical outcomes. Overall, evidence remains insufficient to evaluate the effect of automated point-of-care nerve conduction tests on health outcomes. Therefore, automated point-of-care nerve conduction tests are considered investigational.

Policy History

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>4/2013</td>
<td>New references from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/18/2010</td>
<td>No changes to policy statements.</td>
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</tbody>
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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


