Medical Policy
Quantitative Sensory Testing

Policy Number: 258
BCBSA Reference Number: 2.01.39

Related Policies
None

Policy

Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, and Indemnity
Quantitative sensory testing, including but not limited to current perception threshold testing, pressure-specified sensory device testing, vibration perception threshold testing, and thermal threshold testing, is INVESTIGATIONAL.

Medicare HMO BlueSM and Medicare PPO BlueSM Members
BCBSMA does not cover sensory nerve conduction threshold tests to diagnose sensory neuropathies or radiculopathies for Medicare HMO Blue and Medicare PPO Blue members in accordance with CMS NCD.

National Coverage Determination for Sensory Nerve Conduction Threshold Tests (sNCTs) (160.23)

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPT codes:</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0106T</td>
<td>Quantitative sensory testing (QST), testing and interpretation per extremity; using touch pressure stimuli to assess large diameter sensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0107T</td>
<td>Quantitative sensory testing (QST), testing and interpretation per extremity; using vibration stimuli to assess large diameter fiber sensation</td>
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<tr>
<td>0108T</td>
<td>Quantitative sensory testing (QST), testing and interpretation per extremity; using cooling stimuli to assess small nerve fiber sensation and hyperalgesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0109T</td>
<td>Quantitative sensory testing (QST), testing and interpretation per extremity; using heat-pain stimuli to assess small nerve fiber sensation and hyperalgesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>0110T</td>
<td>Quantitative sensory testing (QST), testing and interpretation per extremity; using other stimuli to assess sensation</td>
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### HCPCS Codes

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<tr>
<th>HCPCS codes:</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>G0255</td>
<td>Current perception threshold/sensory nerve conduction test (SNCT), per limb, any nerve</td>
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### ICD-9 Diagnosis Codes

Investigational for all diagnoses.

### Description

Patients with symptoms of, or the potential for, neurologic damage or disease often require assessment of and quantification of sensory nerve function. Sensory perception and threshold detection are dependent on the integrity of both the peripheral sensory apparatus and peripheral-central sensory pathways. In theory, an abnormality detected by this procedure may signal dysfunction anywhere in the sensory pathway from the receptors, the sensory tracts, and the primary sensory cortex to the association cortex. Conditions such as diabetic neuropathy and uremic and toxic neuropathies, complex regional pain syndrome, carpal tunnel syndrome, and other nerve entrapment/compression disorders are often reflected in abnormalities of nerve dysfunction.

Quantitative sensory testing (QST) systems may be used in conjunction with other standard evaluation and management procedures for the noninvasive assessment and quantification of sensory nerve function. The gold standard for evaluation of myelinated large fibers is the electromyographic nerve
conduction study (EMG-NCS). Depending on the type of stimuli used, QST can assess both small and large sensory fiber dysfunction. Stimuli used in QST include touch, pressure, pain, thermal, or vibratory stimuli. Touch and vibration measure the function of large myelinated A-alpha and A-beta sensory fibers. Thermal stimuli are used to evaluate pathology of small myelinated and unmyelinated nerve fibers whose pathologic changes may not be detected by EMG-NCS.

Examples of devices for quantitative sensory testing include the VPT from Xilas Medical, CASE IV Computer Aided Sensory Evaluator from WR medical Electronics and NK Pressure Specified Device from NK Biotechnical Engineering. All devices for quantitative sensory testing are considered investigational regardless of the commercial name, the manufacturer or FDA approval status.

Summary

There is insufficient evidence that the use of quantitative sensory testing for the noninvasive assessment and quantification of sensory nerve function is as accurate as the current gold standard. Questions remain about reference values in normal populations and the reproducibility of test results. In addition, there is a lack of evidence that use of quantitative sensory testing impacts patient management or improves the net health outcome. Therefore, this technology is considered investigational.

Policy History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/2014</td>
<td>New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/2013</td>
<td>New references 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


