Medical Policy
Bioimpedance Devices for the Detection of Lymphedema

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Policy Number: 261
BCBSA Reference Number: 2.01.82

Related Policies
- Pneumatic Compression Pumps for Treatment of Lymphedema, #354
- End Diastolic Pneumatic Compression Boots as Treatment of Peripheral Vascular Disease or Lymphedema #648

Policy
Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, and Indemnity Medicare HMO BlueSM and Medicare PPO BlueSM Members
Devices using bioimpedance (bioelectrical impedance spectroscopy) for use in the diagnosis, surveillance, or treatment of patients with lymphedema, including use in subclinical secondary lymphedema 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 BlueSM
This is NOT a covered service.

Medicare Members: PPO BlueSM
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
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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<th>CPT codes</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>0239T</td>
<td>Bioimpedance spectroscopy (BIS), measuring 100 frequencies or greater, direct measurement of extracellular fluid differences between the limbs</td>
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**ICD-9 Diagnosis Codes**

Investigational for all diagnoses.

**Description**

Secondary lymphedema of the upper extremity may develop following surgical treatment for breast cancer. This results from lymphatic dysfunction or disruption and can be difficult to accurately diagnose. One challenge is identifying the presence of clinically significant limb swelling through simple noninvasive methods. Bioelectrical impedance is being studied as a diagnostic test for lymphedema, particularly for subclinical disease. Bioimpedance spectroscopy (BIS) analysis uses resistance to electrical current in comparing the composition of fluid compartments. BIS is based on the theory that the amount of opposition to flow of electric current (impedance) through the body is inversely proportional to the volume of fluid in the tissue. In lymphedema, with the accumulation of excess interstitial fluid, tissue impedance decreases.

The early detection of lymphedema before clinical symptoms become apparent is another area of study. Subclinical disease may exist for months or years before overt edema is noted. Bioimpedance has been proposed as one diagnostic test for this condition. Those who support the approach to diagnose subclinical disease believe that early treatment of subclinical lymphedema should result in less severe chronic disease.

An example of a bioimpedance device for the detection of lymphedema is the L-Dex™ U400 from ImpediMed. All bioimpedance devices for the detection of lymphedema are considered investigational regardless of the commercial name, the manufacturer, or FDA approval status.

**Summary**

There is minimal information about the technical and diagnostic performance of bioimpedance testing in the diagnosis (surveillance) of secondary lymphedema; especially for subclinical disease. In addition, there are no data from comparative clinical trials that demonstrate the impact of this test (bioimpedance) on clinical outcomes (clinical utility). The approach to subclinical lymphedema (diagnosis and treatment) appears to be under active investigation. Thus, based on the current scientific evidence and because the impact on net health outcome is not known, use of this testing in the diagnosis or management of patients with known or suspected lymphedema is considered investigational.

**Policy History**

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>2/2014</td>
<td>New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.</td>
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<td>No changes to policy statements.</td>
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<td>No changes to policy statements.</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