Hyperthermia for Cancer Therapy

Prospective review is recommended/required. Please check the member agreement for preauthorization guidelines.

Prospective review is not required.

Description:
Hyperthermia is a type of cancer treatment in which body tissue is exposed to high temperatures (up to 113°F) to damage and kill cancer cells.

Hyperthermia can be administered using local and whole body techniques. Local hyperthermia entails elevating the temperature of superficial or subcutaneous tumors while sparing surrounding normal tissue, using either external or interstitial modalities. Whole body hyperthermia requires the patient to be placed under either general anesthesia or deep sedation. The patient’s body temperature is increased to 108°F by packing the patient in heated (hot water) blankets. The elevated body temperature is maintained for a period of 4 hours, while the essential body functions are closely monitored. Approximately 1 hour is required for a “cooling off” period, after which the patient is constantly observed for a minimum of 12 hours. This modality has been variously termed “systemic thermotherapy” or “whole body hyperthermia.”

In summary, there is inadequate data to permit scientific conclusions regarding the use of whole body hyperthermia as an adjunct to chemotherapy.

Medical Criteria:
None

Policy:
Local hyperthermia therapy is covered.

Whole body hyperthermia therapy is considered not medically necessary since there are inadequate data to permit scientific conclusions regarding the use of whole-body hyperthermia as an adjunct to chemotherapy.

Coverage:
Benefits may vary between groups/contracts. Please refer to the appropriate evidence of coverage, subscriber agreement for the applicable radiation therapy benefits/coverage.

Coding:
The following codes are covered for local hyperthermia:
77600, 77610, 77615

The following codes are considered not medically necessary for all product lines as there are inadequate data to permit scientific conclusions regarding its efficacy:
77620, 77605
There is no specific CPT procedure code for whole-body hyperthermia.

Also Known As:
- Hyperthermia
- Thermal Therapy
- Thermotherapy

Published:
- Provider Update, May 2013
- Provider Update, Apr 2012
- Provider Update, Jul 2011
- Provider Update, Jul 2010
- Provider Update, Jul 2009
- Policy Update, Oct 2008
- Policy Update, May 2008
- Policy Update, Jun 2007


History:
March 2013 - Annual Review

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