Medical Policy
Ultrasonographic Evaluation of Skin Lesions

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Policy Number: 303
BCBSA Reference Number: 2.01.59A
NCD/LCD: NA

Related Policies
Dermatoscopy, #519

Policy
Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, and Indemnity
Medicare HMO BlueSM and Medicare PPO BlueSM Members

Ultrasonographic evaluation of skin lesions is INVESTIGATIONAL.

Ultrasonographic evaluation as a technique to assess photo-aging or skin rejuvenation techniques is considered cosmetic in nature, and therefore is NOT MEDICALLY NECESSARY.

Prior Authorization Information
Inpatient
• For services described in this policy, precertification/preauthorization IS REQUIRED for all products if the procedure is performed inpatient.

Outpatient
• For services described in this policy, see below for products where prior authorization might be required if the procedure is performed outpatient.

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

Description
Ultrasonographic evaluation of skin lesions refers to the use of ultrasound to determine the margins and
depth of surface tumors or inflammatory skin conditions. Ultrasound transducers of at least 20 MHz are
used.
The following applications of ultrasonographic evaluation have been proposed:
• To assess the margins and depth of melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers to aid in surgical
planning,
• To assess actinic keratoses to determine if cryosurgery is an appropriate therapeutic option,
• To follow the course of connective diseases of the skin (i.e., scleroderma) by evaluating the amount
and location of collagen in the dermis, and
• To assess inflammatory skin diseases, such as allergic reactions or psoriasis.

Examples of ultrasonographic evaluations of skin lesions include the Episcan® I-200 Ultrasound System
from Longport, Inc. and the DermaScan™ C Ultrasonic System from Cortex Technology. All
ultrasonographic evaluations of skin lesions are considered investigational or not medically necessary
regardless of the commercial name, the manufacturer or FDA approval status.

Summary
The evidence is insufficient for determining whether the use of ultrasound leads to improved health
outcomes in patients with skin lesions. No identified study examined whether the use of ultrasonography
preoperatively resulted in improved health outcomes, such as lower rates of disease recurrence or
increased survival. Given the lack of sufficient high-quality evidence on the impact of ultrasound skin
imaging on patient management, this technology is considered investigational.
In addition, due to the cosmetic nature of the application, ultrasound skin imaging is considered not
medically necessary to assess photoaging or skin rejuvenation techniques.

Policy History
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/2020</td>
<td>Policy updated with literature review through February 1, 2020, no references added. Policy statements unchanged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/12/2011</td>
<td>New policy, effective 1/12/2011 describing ongoing non-coverage.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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