TITLE: Male Gynecomastia Surgery

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 21, 2017

This policy was developed with input from specialists in plastic surgery, general surgery, and endocrinology and endorsed by the Medical Policy Committee.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – PLEASE READ BEFORE USING THIS POLICY

These services may or may not be covered by all Medica plans. Please refer to the member’s plan document for specific coverage information. If there is a difference between this general information and the member’s plan document, the member’s plan document will be used to determine coverage. With respect to Medicare and Minnesota Health Care Programs, this policy will apply unless these programs require different coverage. Members may contact Medica Customer Service at the phone number listed on their member identification card to discuss their benefits more specifically. Providers with questions about this Medica utilization management policy may call the Medica Provider Service Center toll-free at 1-800-458-5512.

Medica utilization management policies are not medical advice. Members should consult with appropriate health care providers to obtain needed medical advice, care and treatment.

PURPOSE

To promote consistency between reviewers in utilization management decision-making by providing criteria that generally determines the medical necessity of gynecomastia surgery. The Coverage Issues box below outlines the process for addressing the needs of individuals who do not meet these criteria.

BACKGROUND

I. Definitions

A. Gynecomastia is the presence of an abnormal development of glandular breast tissue in males. Gynecomastia in adolescents is very common, estimated to affect up to 40% of 12 to 16 year old boys. In most cases, breast development is minimal and spontaneously regresses two to three years later. Breast development may be bilateral or unilateral. Gynecomastia may be due to a variety of causes, including Klinefelter’s syndrome, congenital hypogonadism, hermaphroditism, testicular trauma, a breast tumor, ingestion of any of a variety of prescription medications, contact with family members who use estrogen creams, abuse of anabolic steroids, abuse of heroin, malnutrition, liver disease, or treatment with chemotherapy. Treatment of gynecomastia depends on the cause.

B. Pseudogynecomastia refers to breast enlargement due to the accumulation of fat. Pseudogynecomastia often affects obese boys and men. It can be treated by weight loss or liposuction.

II. Comments

A. Member demand exists for gynecomastia surgery in the absence of functional signs and symptoms, solely to improve the member’s perception of their appearance.

B. The factors that distinguish appearance-related requests from medically necessary requests are symptoms and physical findings caused by excess breast tissue mass.

MEDICAL NECESSITY CRITERIA

I. Male gynecomastia surgery is considered medically necessary when documentation in the medical record indicates that one of the following criteria are met

A. Pubertal (adolescent) onset gynecomastia when all of the following are met:
   1. The condition has been present for at least two years
   2. Glandular breast tissue confirming true gynecomastia is documented on physical exam and/or mammography
3. The gynecomastia is classified as Grade II, III or IV per the American Society of Plastic Surgeons classification (See Appendix 1)
4. The condition is associated with persistent breast pain, despite the use of analgesics
5. The use of potential gynecomastia-inducing drugs and substances has been identified and discontinued for at least one year, when medically appropriate
6. Hormonal causes, including hyperthyroidism, estrogen excess, prolactinomas and hypogonadism have been excluded by appropriate laboratory testing (e.g., with levels of thyroid stimulating hormone [TSH], estradiol, prolactin, testosterone and/or luteinizing hormone [LH]) and, if present, have been treated for at least one year before surgery has been considered
7. Photographs are required.

**B. Post pubertal-onset gynecomastia when all of the following met:**
1. The condition has been present for at least one year
2. Glandular breast tissue confirming true gynecomastia is documented on physical exam and/or mammography
3. The gynecomastia is classified as Grade II, III or IV per the American Society of Plastic Surgeons classification (See Appendix 1)
4. The condition is associated with persistent breast pain, despite the use of analgesics
5. The use of potential gynecomastia-inducing drugs and substances has been identified and discontinued for at least one year, when medically appropriate
6. Hormonal causes, including hyperthyroidism, estrogen excess, prolactinomas and hypogonadism have been excluded by appropriate laboratory testing (e.g., with levels of thyroid stimulating hormone [TSH], estradiol, prolactin, testosterone and/or luteinizing hormone [LH]) and, if present, have been treated for at least one year before surgery has been considered
7. Photographs are required.

**COVERAGE ISSUES**
1. Prior authorization is required for gynecomastia surgery.
2. Coverage may vary according to the terms of the member's plan document.
3. For Medicare members, refer to: Medicare Coverage Database Search Page:
4. Cosmetic surgery is generally an exclusion in the member's plan document. Surgery performed solely to improve appearance of the male breast, to alter contours of the breast wall, or to treat psychological or psychosocial complaints are cosmetic and therefore, not covered.
5. Surgery for the treatment of pseudogynecomastia is cosmetic and therefore not covered.
6. The use of liposuction to perform gynecomastia surgery is cosmetic and therefore not covered.
7. If the Medical Necessity and Coverage Criteria are met, Medica will authorize benefits within the limits in the member's plan document.
8. If it appears that the Medical Necessity and Coverage Criteria are not met, the individual's case will be reviewed by the medical director or an external reviewer. Practitioners are advised of the appeals process in their Medica Provider Administrative Manual.

**DOCUMENT HISTORY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Effective Date</th>
<th>September 2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPC Endorsement Date(s)</td>
<td>06/2011, 06/2012, 06/2013, 06/2014, 06/2015, 6/2016, 06/2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative Update(s)</td>
<td>05/2017</td>
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The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) recommends using a scale adapted from the McKinney and Simon, Hoffman and Khan scales to characterize the severity of gynecomastia:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade I</td>
<td>Unilateral breast nodular enlargement, minor but visible breast enlargement without skin redundancy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade II</td>
<td>Moderate breast enlargement exceeding areola boundaries with edges that are indistinct from the chest.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade III</td>
<td>Moderate breast enlargement exceeding areola boundaries with edges that are distinct from the chest with skin redundancy present.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade IV</td>
<td>Marked breast enlargement with skin redundancy and feminization of the breast.</td>
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References
Pre-6/2015 Medical Policy Committee (MPC):

06/2015 MPC:

06/2016 MPC:

06/2017 MPC:
No new references.