ELECTRICAL NERVE STIMULATORS (NCD 160.7)

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Related Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines

- Assessing Patient’s Suitability for Electrical Nerve Stimulation Therapy (NCD 160.7.1)
- Category III CPT Codes

Related Medicare Advantage Coverage Summaries

- Complementary and Alternative Medicine
- Stimulators: Electrical and Spinal Cord Stimulators

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines are applicable to UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage Plans offered by UnitedHealthcare and its affiliates.

These Policy Guidelines are provided for informational purposes, and do not constitute medical advice. Treating physicians and healthcare providers are solely responsible for determining what care to provide to their patients. Members should always consult their physician before making any decisions about medical care.

Benefit coverage for health services is determined by the member specific benefit plan document* and applicable laws that may require coverage for a specific service. The member specific benefit plan document identifies which services are covered, which are excluded, and which are subject to limitations. In the event of a conflict, the member specific benefit plan document supersedes the Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines.

Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines are developed as needed, are regularly reviewed and updated, and are subject to change. They represent a portion of the resources used to support UnitedHealthcare coverage decision making. UnitedHealthcare may modify these Policy Guidelines at any time by publishing a new version of the policy on this website. Medicare source materials used to develop these guidelines include, but are not limited to, CMS National Coverage Determinations (NCDs), Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs), Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Medicare Claims Processing Manual, Medicare Program Integrity Manual, Medicare Managed Care Manual, etc. The information presented in the Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines is believed to be accurate and current as of the date of publication, and is provided on an "AS IS" basis. Where there is a conflict between this document and Medicare source materials, the Medicare source materials will apply.

You are responsible for submission of accurate claims. Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines are intended to ensure that coverage decisions are made accurately based on the code or codes that correctly describe the health care services provided. UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines use Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®)**, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), or other coding guidelines. References to CPT® or other sources are for definitional purposes only and do not imply any right to reimbursement or guarantee claims payment.

Medicare Advantage Policy Guidelines are the property of UnitedHealthcare. Unauthorized copying, use and distribution of this information are strictly prohibited.

*For more information on a specific member's benefit coverage, please call the customer service number on the back of the member ID card or refer to the Administrative Guide.

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PURPOSE

The Medicare Advantage Policy Guideline documents are generally used to support UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage claims processing activities and facilitate providers’ submission of accurate claims for the specified services. The document can be used as a guide to help determine applicable:

- Medicare coding or billing requirements, and/or
- Medical necessity coverage guidelines; including documentation requirements.
UnitedHealthcare follows Medicare guidelines such as LCDs, NCDs, and other Medicare manuals for the purposes of determining coverage. It is expected providers retain or have access to appropriate documentation when requested to support coverage. Please utilize the links in the References section below to view the Medicare source materials used to develop this resource document. This document is not a replacement for the Medicare source materials that outline Medicare coverage requirements. Where there is a conflict between this document and Medicare source materials, the Medicare source materials will apply.

POLICY SUMMARY

Overview
Two general classifications of electrical nerve stimulators are employed to treat chronic intractable pain: peripheral nerve stimulators and central nervous system stimulators.

Implanted Peripheral Nerve Stimulators
Payment may be made under the prosthetic device benefit for implanted peripheral nerve stimulators. Use of this stimulator involves implantation of electrodes around a selected peripheral nerve. The stimulating electrode is connected by an insulated lead to a receiver unit which is implanted under the skin at a depth not greater than 1/2 inch. Stimulation is induced by a generator connected to an antenna unit which is attached to the skin surface over the receiver unit. Implantation of electrodes requires surgery and usually necessitates an operating room.

Note: Peripheral nerve stimulators may also be employed to assess a patient’s suitability for continued treatment with an electric nerve stimulator. As explained in §160.7.1, such use of the stimulator is covered as part of the total diagnostic service furnished to the beneficiary rather than as a prosthesis.

Central Nervous System Stimulators (Dorsal Column and Depth Brain Stimulators)
The implantation of central nervous system stimulators may be covered as therapies for the relief of chronic intractable pain, subject to the following conditions:

There are two types of implantations covered by this instruction:
- **Dorsal Column (Spinal Cord) Neurostimulation**: The surgical implantation of neurostimulator electrodes within the dura mater (endodural) or the percutaneous insertion of electrodes in the epidural space is covered.
- **Depth Brain Neurostimulation**: The stereotactic implantation of electrodes in the deep brain (e.g., thalamus and periaqueductal gray matter) is covered.

Conditions for Coverage
No payment may be made for the implantation of dorsal column or depth brain stimulators or services and supplies related to such implantation, unless all of the conditions listed below have been met:

- The implantation of the stimulator is used only as a late resort (if not a last resort) for patients with chronic intractable pain;
- With respect to other treatment modalities (pharmacological, surgical, physical or psychological therapies) they have been tried and did not prove satisfactory and are judged to be unsuitable or contraindicated for the given patient;
- Patients have undergone careful screening, evaluation and diagnosis by a multidisciplinary team prior to implantation. (Such screening must include psychological, as well as physical evaluation);
- All the facilities, equipment, professional and support personnel required for the proper diagnosis, treatment training and followup of the patient must be available; and
- Demonstration of pain relief with a temporarily implanted electrode precedes permanent implantation.

Note: Electrical Stimulation of Auricular Acupuncture Points also known as Electro-Acupuncture Stimulation, Peripheral Subcutaneous Field Stimulation (PSFS) or Peripheral Nerve Field Stimulation (PNFS) using P-Stim™ is not a covered service.

APPLICABLE CODES

The following list(s) of codes is provided for reference purposes only and may not be all inclusive. Listing of a code in this guideline does not imply that the service described by the code is a covered or non-covered health service. Benefit coverage for health services is determined by the member specific benefit plan document and applicable laws that may require coverage for a specific service. The inclusion of a code does not imply any right to reimbursement or guarantee claim payment. Other Policies and Guidelines may apply.
### CPT Code | Description
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0282T | Percutaneous or open implantation of neurostimulator electrode array(s), subcutaneous (peripheral subcutaneous field stimulation), including imaging guidance, when performed, cervical, thoracic or lumbar; for trial, including removal at the conclusion of trial period *(Expired 12/31/2016 – see 64999)*
0283T | Percutaneous or open implantation of neurostimulator electrode array(s), subcutaneous (peripheral subcutaneous field stimulation), including imaging guidance, when performed, cervical, thoracic or lumbar; permanent, with implantation of a pulse generator *(Expired 12/31/2016 – see 64999)*
0284T | Revision or removal of pulse generator or electrodes, including imaging guidance, when performed, including addition of new electrodes, when performed *(Expired 12/31/2016 – see 64999)*

### HCPCS Code | Description
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L8679 | Implantable neurostimulator, pulse generator, any type
L8681 | Patient programmer (external) for use with implantable programmable neurostimulator pulse generator, replacement only
L8682 | Implantable neurostimulator radiofrequency receiver
L8683 | Radiofrequency transmitter (external) for use with implantable neurostimulator radiofrequency receiver
L8685 | Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, single array, rechargeable, includes extension (not separately billable; bundled with insertion of device)
L8686 | Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, single array, non-rechargeable, includes extension (not separately billable; bundled with insertion of device)
L8687 | Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, dual array, rechargeable, includes extension (not separately billable; bundled with insertion of device)
L8688 | Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, dual array, non-rechargeable, includes extension (not separately billable; bundled with insertion of device)
L8689 | External recharging system for battery (internal) for use with implantable neurostimulator, replacement only
L8695 | External recharging system for battery (external) for use with implantable neurostimulator, replacement only

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**REFERENCES**

**CMS National Coverage Determinations (NCDs)**

- NCD 160.7 Electrical Nerve Stimulators
- Reference NCD: NCD 160.7.1 Assessing Patient's Suitability for Electrical Nerve Stimulation Therapy
- NCD 160.19 Phrenic Nerve Stimulator

**CMS Benefit Policy Manual**

- Chapter 15: § 120 Prosthetic Devices

**CMS Transmittals**

- Transmittal 2836, Change Request 8531, Dated 12/13/2013 (CY 2014 Update for Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies 9DMEPOS) Fee Schedule
- Transmittal 3689, Change Request 9903, Dated 01/05/2017 (2017 Durable Medical Equipment Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies HCPCS Code Jurisdiction List)

**MLN Matters**

- Article MM8204, April Quarterly Update for 2013 DME, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies (DMEPOS) Fee Schedule
- Article MM8645, April Quarterly Update for 2014 Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies (DMEPOS) Fee Schedule

**UnitedHealthcare Commercial Policies**

- Electrical Stimulation for the Treatment of Pain and Muscle Rehabilitation
- Implanted Electrical Stimulator for Spinal Cord

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GUIDELINE HISTORY/REVISION INFORMATION

Revisions to this summary document do not in any way modify the requirement that services be provided and documented in accordance with the Medicare guidelines in effect on the date of service in question.

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<th>Action/Description</th>
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