MASSACHUSETTS

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Medical Policy

Ultrafiltration in Decompensated Heart Failure

Table of Contents

Policy Number: 542

BCBSA Reference Number: 2.02.22

Related Policies

None

Policy

Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, and Indemnity
Medicare HMO Blue[SM] and Medicare PPO Blue[SM] Members

Ultrafiltration in patients with decompensated heart failure is **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 Blue[SM]

This is **NOT** a covered service.

Medicare Members: PPO Blue[SM]

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 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

Congestive heart failure is a relatively common problem and frequently results in hospitalizations and readmissions. Ultrafiltration (also referred to as aquapheresis) is a technique being evaluated for removal of excess fluid from patients with volume overload and heart failure. It removes fluid from the blood by using pressure differentials with dialysis equipment or similar filtration devices.

Ultrafiltration may offer the potential for greater and more expeditious volume and sodium removal compared with conventional therapies. Ultrafiltration is generally used for those with decompensated heart failure whose fluid overload is unresponsive to medical management.

An example of an ultrafiltration device for decompensated heart failure is the Aquadex™ FlexFlow™ System from CHF Solutions. All ultrafiltration devices for decompensated heart failure are considered investigational regardless of the commercial name, the manufacturer, or FDA approval status.

Summary

The quality of the evidence on the use of ultrafiltration in patients with decompensated heart failure remains limited. The published clinical trials involve small numbers of patients and report short-term to intermediate outcomes. Ninety-day readmission appears to be reduced in the ultrafiltration group in one study, but otherwise no studies to date address long-term mortality or morbidity, or quality-of-life outcomes. Therefore, given the uncertain impact on health outcomes, this procedure is considered investigational.

Policy History

Date	Action
9/2014	New references added from BCBSA National medical policy.
8/2013	New references from BCBSA National medical policy.
11/2011-4/2012	Medical policy ICD 10 remediation: Formatting, editing and coding updates. No changes to policy statements.
4/2011	Reviewed - Medical Policy Group – Cardiology and Pulmonology. No changes to policy statements.
10/20/2010	New medical policy effective 10/ 20/2010 describing ongoing non-coverage.

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

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