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Medicare Advantage Policy Manual

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Gastric Electrical Stimulation

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IMPORTANT REMINDER

The Medicare Advantage Medical Policy manual is not intended to override the member Evidence of Coverage (EOC), which defines the insured's benefits, nor is it intended to dictate how providers are to practice medicine. Physicians and other health care providers are expected to exercise their medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care for the individual member, including care that may be both medically reasonable and necessary.

The Medicare Advantage medical policies are designed to provide guidance regarding the decision-making process for the coverage or non-coverage of services or procedures in accordance with the member EOC and Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) policies and manuals, along with general CMS rules and regulations. In the event of a conflict, applicable CMS policy or EOC language will take precedence over the Medicare Advantage Medical Policy. In the absence of a specific CMS coverage determination for a requested service, item or procedure, the health plan may apply CMS regulations, as well as their Medical Policy Manual or other applicable utilization management vendor criteria developed with an objective, evidence-based process using scientific evidence, current generally accepted standards of medical practice, and authoritative clinical practice guidelines.

Some services or items may appear to be medically indicated for an individual, but may be a direct exclusion of Medicare or the member's benefit plan. Medicare and member EOCs exclude from coverage, among other things, services or procedures considered to be investigational (experimental) or cosmetic, as well as services or items considered not medically reasonable and necessary under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, §1862(a)(1)(A). In some cases, providers may bill members for these non-covered services or procedures. Providers are encouraged to inform members in advance when they may be financially responsible for the cost of non-covered or excluded services. Members, their appointed representative, or a treating provider can request coverage of a service or item by submitting a pre-service organization determination prior to services being rendered.

DESCRIPTION

Gastric electrical stimulation (GES; also known as gastric pacing) is performed using an implantable device (also referred to as a gastric pacemaker) designed to treat chronic drug-refractory nausea and vomiting secondary to gastroparesis of diabetic or idiopathic etiology. This therapy is also proposed as a treatment of obesity.

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE POLICY CRITERIA

Note: This policy addresses gastric nerve stimulation. It does not address vagus nerve stimulation (VNS), nor does it address vagus nerve blocking. These procedures, and additional treatments for obesity can be found in separate Medicare Advantage medical policies (See Cross References).

For **removal of the gastric electrical stimulation devices only**, as well as **revision/replacement** of *not medically necessary devices*:

Medicare Benefit Policy Manual

Chapter 16 - General Exclusions From Coverage

See Section 180 in the following link:

[§180 - Services Related to and Required as a Result of Services Which Are Not Covered Under Medicare](#)

Note: Please read the applicable section, in its entirety, for complete criteria details. **Removal only** (without replacement) of a device may be allowed as medically necessary when the removal is required in order to treat a medical condition or complication. Even if initial placement of the device did not meet medical necessity coverage criteria and the complication or subsequent medical condition is the result of a prior non-covered service, coverage may be allowed in select circumstances for the removal of the device.

However, a procedure or device that doesn't meet medical necessity criteria is non-covered and any **revision or replacement** to allow for the *continued* use of the non-covered device would not meet Medicare's general requirements for coverage.

For **revision/replacement** requests of previously placed *medically necessary devices*:

Medicare Benefit Policy Manual

Chapter 15 – Covered Medical and Other Health Services

See Section 120 in the following link:

[§120 - Prosthetic Devices, D. Supplies, Repairs, Adjustments, and Replacement^{\[1\]}](#)

Note: Replacement of previously placed medically necessary devices or their components that are non-functioning and irreparable (e.g., device malfunction, etc.) may be considered medically necessary in accordance with the above Medicare reference if the stimulator continues to

be medically indicated and is no longer under manufacturer warranty or if the component is not included under the warranty.^[1]

National Coverage Determinations (NCDs)*

None

Noridian Healthcare Solutions (Noridian) Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) and Articles (LCAs)*

For the initial placement of **Enterra® Gastric Electrical Stimulation System for use in the treatment of gastroparesis:**

- ✓ Retired Enterra® Gastric Electrical Stimulation System Humanitarian Device Exemption R3 ([A51751](#))

Instructions: Highlight A51751 and press Control + C to copy. Click on the LCA A51751 link. Click the “[Search](#)” button provided in the list near the top and enter (or paste) the LCA number into the “ID Search” field. The date of service can be left blank. Click the “Search Now” button.

Note: This LCA was retired May 15, 2014; however, Noridian states, “Retirement does not mean that medical necessity has changed or that the LCD no longer reflects appropriate criteria. Rather, retirement is a reflection of the provider community’s understanding of the medical necessity criteria for the services covered by and compliance with Medicare guidelines on these LCDs.” Therefore, continue to use LCA A51751 for determining medical necessity for the Enterra® gastric electrical stimulation system.^[2]

**Scroll to the “Public Version(s)” section at the bottom of the LCD for links to prior versions if necessary.

POLICY GUIDELINES

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

The information below **must** be submitted for review to determine whether policy criteria are met. If any of these items are not submitted, it could impact our review and decision outcome:

For initial placement:

- Chart notes, medical records, or other clinical documentation that supports severe and chronic gastroparesis of diabetic or idiopathic origin, refractory to drug and other reasonable therapeutic interventions; and,
- The implanting facility's institutional review board (IRB) approval for implantation of the system for one of the specific indications listed above.

For replacement:

- For replacement of irreparable devices or their components, documentation must support reason for replacement (e.g., device malfunction, etc.) and whether or not the stimulator is still under manufacturer warranty or that the component excluded from the warranty.

For revisions and removal only (without replacement):

- Revisions to previously placed medically necessary devices and removals do not require additional documentation.

REGULATORY STATUS

The Enterra™ Therapy System (formerly named Gastric Electrical Stimulation [GES] System; manufactured by Medtronic) is the only device approved for treatment of chronic refractory gastroparesis. It received approval for marketing from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2000 through the humanitarian device exemption (HDE) process.^[3] This process requires the manufacturer to provide adequate information for the FDA to determine that the device has “probable” benefit but does not pose an unreasonable or significant risk; it does not require data confirming the efficacy of the device. The HDE process is available for devices treating conditions that affect fewer than 4,000 Americans per year.

Note, the fact a service or procedure has been issued a CPT/HCPCS code or is FDA approved for a specific indication does not, in itself, make the procedure medically reasonable and necessary. The FDA determines safety and effectiveness of a device or drug, but does not establish medical necessity. While Medicare may adopt FDA determinations regarding safety and effectiveness, CMS or Medicare contractors evaluate whether or not the drug or device is reasonable and necessary for the Medicare population under §1862(a)(1)(A).

CROSS REFERENCES

[Electrical Stimulation and Electromagnetic Therapy Devices](#), Durable Medical Equipment, Policy No. M-83

[Investigational \(Experimental\) Services, New and Emerging Medical Technologies and Procedures, and Other Non-Covered Services](#), Medicine, Policy No. M-149

[Vagus Nerve Stimulation \(VNS\)](#), Surgery, Policy No. M-74

[Vagus Nerve Blocking Therapy for Obesity](#), Surgery, Policy No. M-200

REFERENCES

1. Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Chapter 16 - General Exclusions From Coverage, [§40.4 - Items Covered Under Warranty](#)
2. LCD Retirement Clarification. [cited 05/17/2021]; Available from: <https://med.noridianmedicare.com/web/ifb/policies/lcd/retired/retirement-clarification>
3. Enterra Therapy System FDA Summary of Safety and Effectiveness Data (SSED). [cited 05/17/2021]; Available from: http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/cdrh_docs/pdf/H990014b.pdf

CODING

NOTE: HCPCS code C1823 is NOT the correct code to use for reporting these services. Please refer to the codes listed below for guidance.

Codes	Number	Description	
CPT	43647	Laparoscopy, surgical; implantation or replacement of gastric neurostimulator electrodes, antrum	
	43648	Laparoscopy, surgical; revision or removal of gastric neurostimulator electrodes, antrum	
	43659	Unlisted laparoscopy procedure, stomach	
	43881	Implantation or replacement of gastric neurostimulator electrodes, antrum, open	
	43882	Revision or removal of gastric neurostimulator electrodes, antrum, open	
	43999	Unlisted procedure, stomach	
	64590	Insertion or replacement of peripheral, sacral, or gastric neurostimulator pulse generator or receiver, requiring pocket creation and connection between electrode array and pulse generator or receiver	
	64595	Revision or removal of peripheral, sacral, or gastric neurostimulator pulse generator or receiver, with detachable connection to electrode array	
	95980	Electronic analysis of implanted neurostimulator pulse generator system (eg, rate, pulse amplitude and duration, configuration of wave form, battery status, electrode selectability, output modulation, cycling, impedance and patient measurements) gastric neurostimulator pulse generator/transmitter; intraoperative, with programming	
	95981	; subsequent, without programming	
	95982	; subsequent, with reprogramming	
	HCPCS	C1767	Generator, neurostimulator (implantable), non-rechargeable
		C1778	Lead, neurostimulator (implantable)
		C1822	Generator, neurostimulator (implantable), high frequency, with rechargeable battery and charging system
C1883		Adaptor/Extension, pacing lead or neurostimulator (implantable)	
C1897		Lead, neurostimulator test kit (implantable)	
E0765		FDA approved nerve stimulator, with replaceable batteries, for treatment of nausea and vomiting	
L8678		Electrical stimulator supplies (external) for use with implantable neurostimulator, per month	
L8679		Implantable neurostimulator, pulse generator, any type	
L8680	Implantable neurostimulator electrode, each (<i>Code non-covered by Medicare – see L8679</i>)		

L8685	Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, single array, rechargeable, includes extension (<i>Code non-covered by Medicare – see L8679</i>)
L8686	Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, single array, nonrechargeable, includes extension (<i>Code non-covered by Medicare – see L8679</i>)
L8687	Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, dual array, rechargeable, includes extension (<i>Code non-covered by Medicare – see L8679</i>)
L8688	Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, dual array, nonrechargeable, includes extension (<i>Code non-covered by Medicare – see L8679</i>)

***IMPORTANT NOTE:** Medicare Advantage medical policies use the most current Medicare references available at the time the policy was developed. Links to Medicare references will take viewers to external websites outside of the health plan's web control as these sites are not maintained by the health plan.