



## Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy (POEM) for Achalasia

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State(s):

Idaho  Montana  Oregon  Washington  Other:

LOB(s):

Commercial  Medicare  Medicaid

### Enterprise Policy

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*Clinical Guidelines are written when necessary to provide guidance to providers and members in order to outline and clarify coverage criteria in accordance with the terms of the Member's policy. This Clinical Guideline only applies to PacificSource Health Plans, PacificSource Community Health Plans, and PacificSource Community Solutions in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Because of the changing nature of medicine, this list is subject to revision and update without notice. This document is designed for informational purposes only and is not an authorization or contract. Coverage determination are made on a case-by-case basis and subject to the terms, conditions, limitations, and exclusions of the Member's policy. Member policies differ in benefits and to the extent a conflict exists between the Clinical Guideline and the Member's policy, the Member's policy language shall control. Clinical Guidelines do not constitute medical advice nor guarantee coverage.*

### Background

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Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy (POEM) is an endoscopic procedure used to treat achalasia. The POEM procedure involves guiding an endoscope through the esophagus, making a series of small (incisions) at the base of esophagus. These incisions help relax stiff esophageal muscles and widen any narrowing in that location that is contributing to achalasia.

### Criteria

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#### Commercial

#### **Prior authorization is required.**

PacificSource considers the POEM procedure medically necessary when **ALL** the following criteria are met:

- A. A diagnosis of esophageal achalasia type III (spastic) is established by the following:
  - 1. Twenty percent (20%) or more of swallows have premature spastic contractions as indicated by esophageal manometry; and
  - 2. Non-relaxing lower esophageal sphincter pressure (LES) indicated by a barium esophagogram with fluoroscopy and esophageal manometry.
- B. Failure of a previous treatment for achalasia (e.g. Botox, pneumatic dilation); and
- C. None of the following contraindications are present:
  - 1. Severe pulmonary disease; or
  - 2. Esophageal irradiation; or
  - 3. Esophageal malignancy; or
  - 4. Bleeding disorder, including coagulopathy; or
  - 5. Recent esophageal surgery; and endoscopic intervention.

## Medicaid

PacificSource Community Solutions follows Oregon Administrative Rules 410-120-0000(145), 410-120-1200(2), and 410-141-3825(1)(c), and considers Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy (POEM) not a covered benefit.

## Medicare

PacificSource Medicare follows CMS guidelines and criteria. In the absence of internal policy guidelines, CMS criteria, and evidence-based criteria, requests are reviewed on an individual basis for determination of coverage and medical necessity.

## Experimental/Investigational/Unproven

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PacificSource considers the POEM procedure experimental/investigational and/or unproven for any other indications.

## Coding Information

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43499 Unlisted procedure, esophagus

## Definitions

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Achalasia - an esophageal motility disorder characterized by esophageal aperistalsis and lack of coordinated lower esophageal sphincter (LES) relaxation in response to swallowing.

Aperistalsis - failure of the normal waves of contraction and relaxation that move contents through the digestive tract.

Esophageal manometry - This test measures the pressures and the pattern of muscle contractions in the esophagus and the lower esophageal sphincter.

Pneumatic dilation - An endoscopic therapy for achalasia. An air-filled cylinder-shaped balloon disrupts the muscle fibers of the lower esophageal sphincter.

## References

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## Appendix

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**Policy Number:**

**Effective:** 6/1/2020

**Next review:** 5/1/2022

**Policy type:** Enterprise

**Author(s):**

**Depts:** Health Services

**Applicable regulation(s):**

**Commercial Ops:** 6/2021

**Government Ops:** 6/2021