



Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy (POEM) for Achalasia

LOB(s): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medicare <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medicaid	State(s): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Idaho <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Montana <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oregon <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oregon <input type="checkbox"/> Washington
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Enterprise Policy

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 determinations 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

Achalasia is a primary motor esophageal disorder, characterized by absence of relaxations of the lower esophageal sphincter and of peristalsis along the esophageal body. This results in impaired transition of the food into the stomach and the patient typically experiences dysphagia. Other symptoms reported are regurgitation of saliva or undigested food, respiratory symptoms (nocturnal cough, recurrent aspiration, and pneumonia), heartburn, and chest pain.

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

Commercial

Prior authorization is required.

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

- 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

2. Non-relaxing lower esophageal sphincter pressure (LES) indicated by both a barium esophagogram with fluoroscopy and esophageal manometry

B. Failure of a previous treatment for achalasia (e.g., Botox, pneumatic dilation)

C. None of the following contraindications are present:

1. Severe erosive esophagitis
2. Esophageal malignancy
3. Recent esophageal surgery and endoscopic intervention
4. Bleeding disorder, including coagulopathy
5. Liver cirrhosis with portal hypertension.

Medicaid

PacificSource Community Solutions follows Guideline Note 223 of the OHP Prioritized List of Health Services for coverage of Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy (POEM).

PacificSource Community Solutions considers CPT code 43499 Unlisted procedure, esophagus to be Experimental/Investigational/Unproven per New and Emerging Technologies Policy.

Medicare

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

Experimental/Investigational/Unproven

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

Coding Information

43497 Lower esophageal myotomy, transoral (e.g., peroral endoscopic myotomy [POEM])

43499 Unlisted procedure, esophagus

Definitions

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

Policy Number:

Effective: 6/1/2020

Next review: 1/1/2024

Policy type: Enterprise

Author(s):

Depts: Health Services

Applicable regulation(s):

Commercial Ops: 12/2022

Government Ops: 12/2022