Medical Policy

Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Care Network of Michigan

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Category: Radiology

Title: Corneal Pachymetry

Procedure Code(s): 0025T, S0830

Description / Background

Precise measurements of corneal thickness are necessary for the diagnosis and management of corneal disorders and corneal surgery, as well as for evaluation of patients with newly diagnosed elevated intra-ocular pressure.

Pachymetry is the measurement of corneal thickness and can be performed by either optical or ultrasonic methods. Corneal pachymetry abnormalities include both thinning and thickening disorders. Pachymetry of the cornea is also generally indicated in the preoperative evaluation of a patient for corneal transplant. It may assist the ophthalmologist in deciding whether to perform an extra capsular cataract extraction instead of phacoemulsification in a patient with a history of corneal disease.

CPT / HCPCS Level II Codes and Description

0025T	Determination of corneal thickness (e.g., pachymetry) with interpretation and report, bilateral
S0830	Ultrasound pachymetry to determine corneal thickness, with interpretation and report, unilateral (not effective for Medicare)

Diagnoses / Medical Conditions

Bullous keratopathy
Endothelial corneal dystrophy
Other posterior corneal dystrophies
Mechanical complication of prosthetic corneal graft

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Medical Policy Statement

The safety and effectiveness of corneal pachymetry have been established. It may be considered a useful diagnostic option in the evaluation of corneal pathologies and for the evaluation of individuals with newly diagnosed ocular hypertension.

Rationale

Corneal pachymetry measurements can help diagnose and monitor the treatment of specific corneal disorders. Medical literature supports the use of this technology for specific conditions.

Medical Policy Position Summary (Non-clinical summary statement for customer use)

Pachymetry measures the thickness of the cornea. It is useful in monitoring the progression of certain disorders that cause the cornea to become thickened (or filled with water), resulting in a loss of vision. The safety and effectiveness of corneal pachymetry have been established. It may be considered a useful diagnostic option in the evaluation of corneal pathologies and for the evaluation of individuals with newly diagnosed ocular hypertension

Inclusionary and Exclusionary Guidelines (Clinically based guidelines that may support individual consideration and pre-authorization decisions)

Corneal pachymetry is generally indicated for the following conditions:

- Fuch's endothelial dystrophy or bullous keratopathy
- Posterior polymorphous dystrophy
- Corneal rejection post penetrating keratopathy
- Corneal edema
- Keratoconus
- Corneal degeneration
- Preoperative evaluation of a patient contemplating corneal transplant
- Postoperative evaluation of a patient following corneal transplant
- Patients with elevated intraocular pressure (once in a lifetime)
- Patients with enlarged cup-disc ratios > 0.3

Corneal pachymetry is not medically indicated under the following circumstances:

- The test is done to evaluate errors of refraction.
- Routine pre-cataract extraction evaluation of the cornea.
- Preoperative measurements and mapping of the cornea prior to LASIK surgery

Hyperlink (Audit criteria)

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Related Policies

N/A

Hyperlink

Medicare Information

There are no national or Wisconsin Physicians Service (Michigan) local medical policies for this service. 0025T and S0830 are payable by Medicare.

(The above Medicare information is current as of the review date for this policy. However, since Medicare coverage issues and policies may be updated or revised by Centers for Medicare & Medicare Services (CMS, formerly HCFA) on a frequent basis, the most current information may not be contained in this document. For the most current information, you should contact an official source.

References

- Franco, Sandra, Jose B. Almeida, PhD; M. Parafita, PhD, "Measurement of Corneal Thickness by Videopachymetry: Preliminary Results", Journal of Refractive Surgery, Volume 16, September/October 2000.
- CIGNA Healthcare Medicare Administration, "Pachymetry", February 13, 2003.
- HGSA Medicare Medical Policy Bulletin, "Corneal Pachymetry" policy number M-65 (Draft), 6/12/03.
- The Ocular Hypertension Treatment Study, National Eye Institute, 2020 Vision Place, Bethesda, MD 20892-3655; (301) 496-5248, www.nei.nih.gov
- Wisconsin Physicians Service, Medicare Part B, Michigan Medical policies: "Corneal Pachymetry", start date of notice period 8/1/03.

The articles reviewed in this research include those obtained in an Internet based literature search for relevant medical references through 8/41/03, the date the research was completed.

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Joint BCBSM/BCN Medical Policy History

Date	Rationale
10/6/03	Joint policy established

Next Review: This is an established policy and no longer subject to routine review.

Pre-Consolidation Medical Policy History

Original Policy Date	Comments
BCN N/A	Revised: N/A
BCBSM N/A	Revised: N/A

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