Medical Policy

Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Care Network of Michigan

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Category: Medicine

Title: Cardiokymography

Procedure Code(s): Q0035

Description / Background

Cardiokymography (CKG) is a noninvasive procedure used to detect stress-induced abnormalities in the left wall of the heart. This procedure provides an additional means for the diagnosis and assessment of coronary artery disease and cardiac ischemia. Although CKG may be performed as an independent test, the greatest benefit of this test is achieved through its adjunctive use with electrocardiographic (ECG) stress testing.

CKG is a simple, relatively inexpensive add-on test to the standard exercise test and involves placing a flat circular plate over the heart. This plate sends out electromagnetic signals directed at the heart. The beating heart disturbs the signals and the result is recorded as an electrical signal. This signal is compared to normal signals to determine whether the heart is pumping effectively.

CPT / HCPCS Level II Codes and Description

Q0035 Cardiokymography

Diagnoses / Medical Conditions

N/A

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Medical Policy Statement

The clinical effectiveness of cardiokymography has not been proven.

Rationale

Medical literature shows no statistically significant difference or improvement in diagnostic accuracy in comparison to currently available non-invasive studies such as exercise electrocardiography; it also does not support improvement in health outcomes. Its clinical effectiveness has not been proven.

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

This test does not appear to be better than the cardiac tests, such as an EKG, that are already in use to identify coronary artery disease in a patient. Cardiokymography cannot be used by itself; it must be used **with** other established tests that provide the same information. Therefore, it is not necessary to use cardiokymography.

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

None

Related Policies

None

Medicare Information

There is no written national Medicare policy. Some regional centers for Medicare services (Empire, NJ) consider this test a covered service only when used as an adjunct to ECG stress testing when specific conditions are met; local Michigan Medicare does not have a written policy for this procedure. Medicaid does not have a written policy regarding this procedure and will review on an individual consideration (IC) basis.

(The above Medicare information is current as of the review date for this policy. However, the coverage issues and policies maintained by the Centers for Medicare & Medicare Services [CMS, formerly HCFA] are updated and/or revised periodically. Therefore, the most current CMS information may not be contained in this document. For the most current information, the reader should contact an official Medicare source.)

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References

A literature search from January 2002 through August 2004 resulted in no new published literature that would change the current policy. Most literature of significance is dated prior to the year 2000; many of which are dated prior to 1990.

- Froelicher, Victor F., MD, William F. Fearon, MD, et al, "Lessons Learned from Studies of the Standard Exercise ECG Test," *Chest,* 1999; 116:1442-1451.

The articles reviewed in this research include those obtained in an Internet based literature search for relevant medical references through October 12, 2004, the date the research was completed.

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Joint BCBSM/BCN Medical Policy History

Date	Rationale
6/3/02	Joint medical policy established
11/10/04	Routine update of medical policy; policy retired

Next Review: This policy is established and is no longer subject to periodic 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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