



Blue Cross
Blue Shield
of Michigan

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Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Medical Policy

These documents are not used to determine benefits or reimbursement. Please reference the appropriate certificate or contract for benefit information.

Enterprise:	Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
Department	Medical Affairs
Effective Date:	May 1, 2015
Next Review Date	3rd Quarter 2027

Topic: Vitrectomy Face Support System

Background:

A vitrectomy is the surgical removal of the vitreous humor and is performed to clear blood and debris from the eye to remove scar tissue or to alleviate traction on the retina. After surgery, gas or silicone oil may be injected into the eye, creating a bubble for retinal tamponade in order to keep the retina in place.

To enhance healing, recovering patients may be required to maintain a face-down position for the bubble to effectively apply pressure to the area. The pressure allows the retina to re-bond with the eye wall while new vitreous forms and replaces the bubble.

A vitrectomy face-down support system is designed for use by patients who have undergone vitrectomy surgery to help maintain the face-down positioning requirement post surgery. Patients may require the face-down position for several hours daily for several weeks. Vitrectomy support devices are reported with E1399 – Durable Medical equipment, miscellaneous.

Medical Policy Statement:

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan considers the vitrectomy face support system medically necessary for patients who have undergone vitrectomy surgery, and who are required to maintain a face-down position post surgery. Coverage of vitrectomy face support systems are provided through rental only. The rental of a vitrectomy face support may be medically necessary for up to 6 weeks after vitrectomy surgery.

Rationale:

A face-down vitrectomy support system can enhance healing for recovering patients who have undergone vitrectomy surgery. Several studies have demonstrated better outcomes in healing utilizing face-down positioning. Patients are more readily able to comply with the strict positioning requirements when utilizing the device.

Scope:

This policy applies to all underwritten book of business and self-funded contracts pending customer review.

BCBSM Medical Policy History

Policy Effective Date	BCBSM Signature Date	Comments
5/1/2015	6/18/15	BCBSM policy established
5/1/2015	8/26/16	Annual review
5/1/2015	9/27/17	Annual review – included the Vitrectomy Support System Reimbursement Guideline into the policy
5/1/2015	11/30/2018	Annual review
5/1/2015	09/24/2019	Updated References and Medicare information.
05/01/2015	7/9/2020	Annual review; no changes
05/01/2015	7/15/2021	Annual review; no changes
5/1/2015	7/7/2022	Annual review; no changes
5/1/2015	7/13/2023	Annual review; no changes
5/1/2015	7/11/2024	Annual review; no changes
5/1/2015	7/10/2025	Annual review; no changes
5/1/2015	7/14/2026	Annual review; no changes

Addendum

Reimbursement:

All claims are reviewed based upon medical necessity. The following guideline is to be utilized for these claims.

NOC Code	Description	Reimbursement Amount
E1399	Vitreotomy Support System- First week rental	Allow \$70.00 per week
E1399	Vitreotomy Support System- subsequent week rental up to six weeks	Allow \$55.00 per week
E1399	Vitreotomy Support System beyond six week rental	Route to Medical Review and Appeals

Medicare:

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has confirmed that these devices are statutorily noncovered because they do not fall within a Medicare benefit category. These types of devices are considered “precautionary devices” and also can be used for purposes other than the treatment of an illness or injury. The denial is a coverage denial, not a medical necessity denial.

References:

- a.) Almeida DR, et al. Anatomical and visual outcomes of macular hole surgery with short-duration 3-day face-down positioning. [Retina](#). 2012 Mar;32(3):506-10.
- b.) American Academy of Ophthalmology Retina Panel. Preferred practice Pattern Guidelines. Idiopathic macular hole. 2013 [<http://www.aao.org/pp>] accessed 4/14/15.

- c.) Krohn J. Duration of face-down positioning after macular hole surgery; A comparison between 1 week and 3 days. Acta Ophtalmol Scand. 2005 Jun;83(3); 289-92.
- d.) Jurisdiction B Connections (Correct Coding – Face-Down Positioning Devices) March 2016, (page 42). Joint Durable Medical Equipment Medicare Administrative Contractor (DME MAC) Publication