Intradialytic Parenteral Nutrition

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Description of Procedure or Service

Intradialytic parenteral nutrition (IDPN) is the infusion of an intravenous nutritional formula of hyperalimentation, such as amino acids, glucose, and lipids, during dialysis, to treat protein calorie malnutrition in an effort to decrease the associated morbidity and mortality experienced in patients with renal failure. This policy only addresses intravenous parenteral nutrition as an adjunct to hemodialysis (not peritoneal dialysis).

Protein calorie malnutrition occurs in an estimated 25%–40% of those undergoing dialysis. The cause of malnutrition in dialysis patients is often multifactorial and may include underdialysis, chronic inflammation, protein loss in the dialysate solution (particularly in peritoneal dialysis), untreated metabolic acidosis, and decreased oral intake.

The clinical evaluation of malnutrition is multifactorial but typically includes measurement of serum albumin. Serum albumin levels correlate with nutritional status but are imperfect measures of nutrition because they can be affected by multiple other disease states. Protein calorie malnutrition is associated with increased morbidity and mortality. For example, the risk of death is increased more than 10-fold in those whose serum albumin levels are less than 2.5 g/dL, and those with a serum albumin near the normal range (i.e., between 3.5 to 3.9 g/dL) have a mortality rate twice as high as those with albumin greater than 4.0 g/dL.

In patients receiving chronic dialysis, the National Kidney Foundation currently recommends a daily protein intake of 1.2 g/kg or more in patients undergoing hemodialysis and 1.3 g/kg or more in patients undergoing peritoneal dialysis. When malnutrition is present, a stepwise approach to treatment is generally used, beginning with dietary counseling and diet modifications, followed by oral nutritional supplements, and then by enteral nutrition supplements or parenteral nutritional supplements if needed.

Intradialytic parenteral nutrition (IDPN) which refers to infusion of hyperalimentation fluids at the time of either hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis, has been investigated as a technique to treat protein calorie malnutrition in an effort to decrease the associated morbidity and mortality. IDPN solutions are similar to those used for total parenteral nutrition (TPN). A typical solution contains 10% amino acids and 40% to 50% glucose, 10% to 20% lipids, or a mixture of carbohydrate or lipids, depending on patient needs. In hemodialysis, the IDPN infusion is administered through the venous port of the dialysis tubing, typically, 30 minutes after dialysis has begun, and continued throughout the remainder of a dialysis session.

***Note: This Medical Policy is complex and technical. For questions concerning the technical language and/or specific clinical indications for its use, please consult your physician.
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Policy

BCBSNC will provide coverage for Intradialytic Parenteral Nutrition when it is determined to be medically necessary because the medical criteria and guidelines shown below are met.

Benefits Application

Please refer to Certificate for availability of benefits. This policy relates only to the services or supplies described herein. Benefits may vary according to benefit design; therefore certificate language should be reviewed before applying the terms of the policy.

When Intradialytic Parenteral Nutrition is covered

Intradialytic parenteral nutrition (IDPN) may be considered medically necessary when the following criteria are met:

A) The patient is currently receiving dialysis for End Stage Renal Disease AND

1) The patient has an albumin less than 3.2 g/dl and a prealbumin less than 30 mg/dl AND

2) The patient has an adequate dialysis prescription (single pool KT/V of at least 1.25) and their acidosis has been corrected (serum tCO2 of greater than or equal to 22 mmol/l) AND

3) The patient cannot tolerate full nutrition with an oral supplement, but can consume at least 50% of their necessary caloric and protein intake (diabetic gastroparesis) OR

B) The patient has failed or is unable to tolerate adequate nasogastric tube feedings or PEG tube feedings with enteral nutritional supplements. After an initial 3 month trial continued therapy will depend on the demonstration of a significant rise in the prealbumin level to greater than 30 mg/dl and continued documented compliance with criteria noted above.

C) Approval will only be for 9 months after the initial trial. Patients should be reevaluated for continued need after 9 months of intradialytic parenteral nutrition therapy.

When Intradialytic Parenteral Nutrition is not covered

Intradialytic parenteral nutrition is considered not medically necessary when offered in addition to regularly scheduled infusions of TPN.

In patients who cannot tolerate any oral/enteral feedings, TPN is the appropriate therapy and IDPN is considered investigational as a single therapy.

Policy Guidelines

Evidence for individuals undergoing hemodialysis who receive IDPN includes multiple RCTs and systematic reviews. Relevant outcomes are overall survival, change in disease status, morbid events, health status measures, quality of life, treatment-related mortality and treatment-related morbidity. Findings from a well-conducted, adequately-powered RCT that was designed to evaluate the effects of 1-year of IDPN plus oral supplements failed to show any incremental benefit in mortality or hospitalization rates at 2 years compared to oral supplements alone. Other smaller RCTs assessed the impact of IDPN on nutritional or inflammatory outcomes, rather than the more important
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outcomes of morbidity, mortality, and quality of life. Limitations of these smaller RCTs include inadequate power to demonstrate benefits and heterogeneity in the trial patient population, resulting from variation in diagnostic criteria for protein-energy wasting, co-morbid conditions, dialysis practices, as well as composition and doses of IDPN solutions. Published systematic reviews, which included RCTs but did not pool data, have also concluded that the current evidence does not demonstrate benefits in the net health outcome with the use of IDPN for patients who would not otherwise qualify for IDPN. The evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

Patients who are considered candidates for TPN are those who have a severe pathology of the alimentary tract that does not allow absorption of sufficient nutrients to maintain weight and strength commensurate with the patient’s general condition. IDPN is considered not medically necessary when added to regularly scheduled infusions of TPN and may be harmful due to the excess administration of lipids, electrolyte problems such as hyperkalemia, and volume difficulties. When the patient cannot tolerate oral or enteral feedings, TPN should be considered, since the data on IDPN for these patients is minimal and the impact on net health outcomes in these patients is not known. Therefore IDPN is considered investigational in these patients.

Billing/Coding/Physician Documentation Information

This policy may apply to the following codes. Inclusion of a code in this section does not guarantee that it will be reimbursed. For further information on reimbursement guidelines, please see Administrative Policies on the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina web site at www.bcbsnc.com. They are listed in the Category Search on the Medical Policy search page.

Applicable codes: 90935, 90937, 90940, 90945, 90947, B4164, B4168, B4172, B4176, B4178, B4180, B4185, B4189, B4193, B4197, B4199, B4216, B4220, B4222, B4224, B5000, B5100, B5200

BCBSNC may request medical records for determination of medical necessity. When medical records are requested, letters of support and/or explanation are often useful, but are not sufficient documentation unless all specific information needed to make a medical necessity determination is included.

Scientific Background and Reference Sources

Senior Medical Director review 1/2010
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel 10/2012


Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 4/2013
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Medical Director review 4/2014

Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 4/2015
Medical Director review 4/2015
Medical Director review 4/2016
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 4/2017
Medical Director review 4/2017
Medical Director review 5/2017
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 4/2018
Medical Director review 4/2018
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 4/2019
Medical Director review 4/2019

Policy Implementation/Update Information

2/2/10 New policy implemented. Reviewed with Senior Medical Director 1/8/2010. “Intradialytic parenteral nutrition may be considered medically necessary when it is offered as an alternative to a regularly scheduled regimen of total parenteral nutrition only in those patients who would be considered candidates for total parenteral nutrition (TPN), i.e., a severe pathology of the alimentary tract that does not allow absorption of sufficient nutrients to maintain weight and strength commensurate with the patient’s general condition.” “Intradialytic parenteral nutrition is considered not medically necessary in those patients who would be considered a candidate for TPN, but for whom the intradialytic parenteral nutrition is not offered as an alternative to TPN, but in addition to regularly scheduled infusions to TPN.” “Intradialytic parenteral nutrition is considered investigational in those patients who would not otherwise be considered candidates for TPN.” Notice given 2/2/2010. Policy effective 5/11/2010. (btw)

6/22/10 Policy Number(s) removed (amw)

11/23/10 Medical criteria reformatted, but intent of policy is unchanged. Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 10/28/10. Policy accepted as written. (adn)

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Medical policy is not an authorization, certification, explanation of benefits or a contract. Benefits and eligibility are determined before medical guidelines and payment guidelines are applied. Benefits are determined by the group contract and subscriber certificate that is in effect at the time services are rendered. This document is solely provided for informational purposes only and is based on research of current medical literature and review of common medical practices in the treatment and diagnosis of disease. Medical practices and knowledge are constantly changing and BCBSNC reserves the right to review and revise its medical policies periodically.