Peripheral Arterial Tonometry (PAT)

**Description of Procedure or Service**

Measurement of arterial endothelial function in patients is proposed as an assessment tool for the development of atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease. Endothelial function has been shown to be impaired in patients with coronary artery disease, type II diabetes mellitus, hypertension, obesity, renal failure, and hypercholesterolemia. Studies of endothelial function in relation to cardiovascular health has prompted speculation that endothelial function may serve as a “barometer” for cardiovascular health and can be used for patient care management and evaluation of therapeutic strategies.

Peripheral arterial tonometry (PAT) is a non-invasive method to measure endothelial dysfunction and potentially identify patients with early-stage cardiovascular disease. The EndoPAT system (Itamar Medical LTD) was cleared by the FDA through the 510(k) process in November 2003. It involves the measurement of blood flow in the fingertips following compression of the upper arm with an inflatable cuff (a reactive hyperemia method). It is indicated for use as a diagnostic aid in the detection of coronary artery endothelial dysfunction and can be used in an office setting with minimal training.

***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.***

**Policy**

Peripheral arterial tonometry is considered investigational for all applications. BCBSNC does not provide coverage for investigational services or procedures.

**Benefits Application**

This medical policy relates only to the services or supplies described herein. Please refer to the Member's Benefit Booklet for availability of benefits. Member's benefits may vary according to benefit design; therefore member benefit language should be reviewed before applying the terms of this medical policy.

**When Peripheral Arterial Tonometry is covered**

Not Applicable

**When Peripheral Arterial Tonometry is not covered**

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Peripheral Arterial Tonometry (PAT)

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Policy Guidelines

There is insufficient evidence to support the use of PAT in assessing cardiovascular disease risk or in determining appropriate healthcare regimens for patients with cardiovascular disease.

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: 0337T

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 11/2014

Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 10/2015

Medical Director review 10/2015
Peripheral Arterial Tonometry (PAT)

Medical Director review 10/2016
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 10/2017
Medical Director review 10/2017
Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 10/2018
Medical Director review 10/2018

Policy Implementation/Update Information

12/31/13 New policy developed. Peripheral arterial tonometry is considered investigational for all applications. BCBSNC does not provide coverage for investigational services or procedures. Medical Director review 11/2013. (mco)


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.