

Corporate Medical Policy

Prostatic Urethral Lift

File Name:	prostatic_urethral_lift
Origination:	10/2015
Last CAP Review:	11/2018
Next CAP Review:	11/2019
Last Review:	11/2018

Description of Procedure or Service

Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) is a common condition among older individuals that results from hyperplastic nodules in the periurethral or transitional zone of the prostate. BPH prevalence increases with age and is present in more than 80% of individuals aged 70 to 79. The clinical manifestations of BPH include increased urinary frequency, nocturia, an urgency or hesitancy to urinate, and a weak stream when urinating. The urinary tract symptoms often progress with worsening hypertrophy and may lead to acute urinary retention, incontinence, renal insufficiency, and/or urinary tract infection.

Two scores are widely used to evaluate BPH-related symptoms. The American Urological Association Symptom Index (AUA-SI) is a self-administered 7-item questionnaire assessing the severity of various urinary symptoms. Total AUA-SI scores range from 0 to 35, with overall severity categorized as mild (≤ 7), moderate (8-19), or severe (20-35).¹ The International Prostate Symptom Score incorporates the questions from the AUA-SI and a quality of life question or “Bother score.”

Management of BPH

Evaluation and management of BPH include assessment for other causes of lower urinary tract dysfunction (e.g., prostate cancer). Symptom severity and the degree that symptoms are bothersome determine the therapeutic approach.

Medical Therapy

A discussion about medical therapy is generally indicated for patients with moderate-to-severe symptoms (e.g., AUA-SI score, ≥ 8), bothersome symptoms, or both. Available medical therapies for BPH-related lower urinary tract dysfunction include α -adrenergic blockers (e.g., alfuzosin, doxazosin, tamsulosin, terazosin, silodosin), 5α -reductase inhibitors (e.g., finasteride, dutasteride), combination α -adrenergic blockers and 5α -reductase inhibitors, anti-muscarinic agents (e.g., darifenacin, solifenacin, oxybutynin), and phosphodiesterase-5 inhibitors (e.g., tadalafil).

Surgical and Ablative Therapies

Patients who do not have sufficient response to medical therapy, or who are experiencing significant side effects with medical therapy, may be referred for surgical or ablative therapies. Various surgical or ablative procedures are used to treat BPH. Transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP) is generally considered the reference standard for comparisons of BPH treatments. In the perioperative period, TURP is associated with risks of any operative procedure (e.g., anesthesia risks, blood loss). Although short-term mortality risks are generally low, one large prospective study with 10,654 patients reported the following short-term complications: “failure to void (5.8%), surgical revision (5.6%), significant urinary tract infection (3.6%), bleeding requiring transfusions (2.9%), and transurethral resection syndrome (1.4%).” Incidental carcinoma of the

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prostate was diagnosed by histologic examination in 9.8% of patients. In the longer term, TURP is associated with risk of sexual dysfunction and incontinence.

Several minimally invasive prostate ablation procedures have also been developed, including transurethral microwave thermotherapy, transurethral needle ablation of the prostate, urethromicroablation phototherapy, and photoselective vaporization of the prostate. The minimally invasive procedures were individually compared with transurethral resection of the prostate at the time they were developed, which provided a general benchmark for evaluating those procedures.

Prostatic Urethral Lift (PUL)

The prostatic urethral lift procedure involves placement of one or more implants in the lateral lobes of the prostate using a transurethral delivery device. The implant device is designed to retract the prostate to allow expansion of the prostatic urethra. The implants are retained in the prostate to maintain an expanded urethral lumen.

One device, the NeoTract UroLift® System (NeoTract, Pleasanton, CA), has clearance for marketing by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA; see Regulatory Status section). The device has 2 main components: the delivery device and the implant. Each delivery device comes preloaded with 1 UroLift implant.

Regulatory Status

One implantable transprostatic tissue retractor system has been cleared for marketing by FDA through the 510(k) process. The NeoTract UroLift System UL400 (NeoTract, Pleasanton, CA) received clearance in December 2013 (after receiving clearance through FDA's de novo classification process in March 2013; K130651/DEN130023). In March 2016, FDA determined that the UL500 was substantially equivalent to existing devices (UL400) for the treatment of symptoms of urinary flow obstruction secondary to benign prostatic hyperplasia in men age 50 years and older. In 2017, FDA expanded the indication for the UL400 and UL500 to include lateral and median lobe hyperplasia in men 45 years or older.

******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

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

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 Prostatic Urethral Lift is covered

Use of prostatic urethral lift in individuals with moderate-to-severe lower urinary tract obstruction due to benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) may be considered **medically necessary** when ALL of the following criteria are met:

- Patient is not an appropriate candidate for an invasive surgical procedure using general anesthesia, such as transurethral resection of the prostate, or the patient opts to undergo a minimally invasive procedure.
- Patient has persistent or progressive lower urinary tract symptoms or is unable to tolerate medical therapy for BPH, after an appropriate trial period, defined as one month with an

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alpha-1-adrenergic antagonist or 6 months with a 5-alpha-reductase inhibitor without significant side effects.

- Prostate gland volume is estimated to be ≤ 80 cc, by clinical or ultrasound assessment.
- The patient is 45 years of age or older.
- Prostate anatomy demonstrates normal bladder neck without an obstructive or protruding median lobe.
- Patient has had appropriate screening for prostate cancer within the past year.
- Patient does not have a contact dermatitis nickel allergy.
- The prostatic urethral lift device system is used by a physician trained in the specialty of Urology.

When Prostatic Urethral Lift is not covered

Use of prostatic urethral lift in all other situations is considered investigational.

Policy Guidelines

For individuals who have lower urinary tract obstruction symptoms due to benign prostatic hyperplasia who receive a PUL, the evidence includes systematic reviews, randomized controlled trials (RCTs), and noncomparative studies. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, functional outcomes, health status measures, quality of life, and treatment-related morbidity. One randomized controlled trial, the BPH6 study, compared the prostatic urethral lift procedure with transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP) and reported that the prostatic urethral lift was noninferior for the study's composite end point, which required concurrent fulfillment of six independently validated measures of symptoms, safety, and sexual health. While TURP was superior to prostatic urethral lift in managing lower urinary tract symptoms, prostatic urethral lift did provide significant symptom improvement over two years. Prostatic urethral lift was further superior to transurethral resection of the prostate in preserving sexual function.

These findings were corroborated by another randomized controlled trial, entitled the LIFT study, which compared PUL with sham control. Patients underwent washout of BPH medications before enrollment. LIFT reported that patients with the PUL procedure, compared with patients who had sham surgery and no BPH medication, had greater improvements in lower urinary tract symptoms without worsened sexual function at 3 months. After 3 months, patients in the sham group were given the option to have PUL surgery; 80% of the patients chose that option. Publications from this trial reported that functional improvements were durable over 3-, 4-, and 5-year follow-ups in a subset of patients treated with PUL; there was a high number of exclusions and loss to follow-up in that group. The evidence is sufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

In 2018, the American Urological Association revised its guideline titled "Surgical Management of Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms Attributed to Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia" to include the following statements related to PUL:

"Clinicians should consider PUL as an option for patients with LUTS attributed to BPH provided prostate volume < 80 g and verified absence of an obstructive middle lobe; however, patients should be informed that symptom reduction and flow rate improvement is less significant compared to TURP. (Moderate Recommendation; Evidence Level: Grade C)

PUL may be offered to eligible patients concerned with erectile and ejaculatory function for the treatment of with LUTS attributed to BPH. (Conditional Recommendation; Evidence Level: Grade C)".

Billing/Coding/Physician Documentation Information

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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: 52441, 52442, C9739, C9740

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

American Urological Association (AUA). Guideline: Management of Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia. 2010, reaffirmed 2014; <http://www.auanet.org/education/guidelines/benign-prostatic-hyperplasia.cfm> . Accessed September 11, 2015.

BCBSA Medical Policy Reference Manual [Electronic Version]. 7.01.151, 8/13/15

Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel 11/2015

BCBSA Medical Policy Reference Manual [Electronic Version]. 7.01.151, 8/11/16

Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel 11/2016

Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel 11/2017

BCBSA Medical Policy Reference Manual [Electronic Version]. 7.01.151, 12/14/2017

BCBSA Medical Policy Reference Manual [Electronic Version]. 7.01.151, 8/9/2018

Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel 11/2018

Foster H.E., Barry M.J., et al. Surgical Management of Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms Attributed to Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (2018). American Urological Association. Retrieved at [https://www.auanet.org/guidelines/benign-prostatic-hyperplasia/lower-urinary-tract-symptoms-\(2018\)](https://www.auanet.org/guidelines/benign-prostatic-hyperplasia/lower-urinary-tract-symptoms-(2018)) on January 3, 2019.

United States Food and Drug Administration. Implantable Transprostatic Tissue Retractor System. 510(K) Number: K173087; 12/28/2017. Retrieved at <https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfpmn/pmn.cfm?ID=K173087> on January 3, 2019.

Medical Director review 7/2019

Policy Implementation/Update Information

10/30/15 New policy issued. Prostatic urethral lift is considered investigational. (sk)

3/31/17 Reference added. Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 11/30/2016. (sk)

7/1/18 Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 11/29/2017. Reference added. Policy statement changed to indicate that use of prostatic urethral lift in individuals with moderate to severe lower urinary tract obstruction due to benign prostatic hyperplasia may be considered medically necessary when all of the specified criteria are met. (sk)

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- 1/15/19 References added. Specialty Matched Consultant Advisory Panel review 11/28/2018. 2017 FDA expanded indication added to Regulatory status. Age requirement lowered to 45 years of age. 2018 American Urological Association guideline added to Policy Guidelines. (sk)
- 7/30/19 Medical Director review. Removed the following from the eighth bulleted statement in When Prostatic Urethral Lift is covered: “does not have prostate-specific antigen level ≥ 3 ng/mL, OR”. (sk)

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.