Subject: Kyphoplasty and Vertebroplasty*

Effective Date: March 27, 2007

Department(s): Utilization Management

Policy: Kyphoplasty (also called vertebral augmentation) and vertebroplasty are reimbursable for medically necessary indications as delineated in this policy, under Plans administered by Qualcare Inc.

Objective: To assure proper and consistent reimbursement and to provide objective criteria for a medically necessary service.

Procedure:

A. Kyphoplasty (CPT 22523 [thoracic], 22524 [lumbar], 22525 [each additional segment]) and vertebroplasty (S2360, S2361 [cervical], (22520 [thoracic], 22521 [lumbar], 22522 [each additional segment] are reimbursable under circumstances that include but are not limited to the following:

1. Osteoporotic vertebral collapse (733.00 – 733.09) causing debilitating pain, which has not responded to less invasive medical treatment including but not limited to braces, analgesics and NSAIDs
2. Traumatic fracture of a vertebral body (721.7, 805.0 – 805.7, 806.00 – 806.79)
3. Primary malignant tumor of bone or marrow (170.2, 200.00 – 208.92)
4. Metastatic bone tumor (198.5)
5. Multiple myeloma (203.0)
6. Pathologic vertebral fracture (733.13)
7. Painful osseous hemangioma (228.90)
8. Other bone pathology causing progressive bone destruction or imminent risk of vertebral collapse, including but not limited to the following:
   a. Eosinophilic granuloma of bone (277.89)
   b. Severe osteoporosis (733.00 – 733.09)
B. When imaging guidance is used for vertebroplasty or kyphoplasty the following radiologic supervision CPT codes are reimbursable in addition to the above procedure codes:

1. 72292 (CT guidance)
2. 72291 (fluoroscopic guidance)

C. Kyphoplasty and vertebroplasty are not reimbursable for the following as there is not a significant body of peer-reviewed literature supporting their efficacy for these diagnoses. Under these circumstances they are therefore deemed experimental, investigational, or unproven.

1. Asymptomatic fractures or fractures healing by conservative means with progressive decrease of pain and disability (805.0 – 805.7, 806.00 – 806.79)
2. Kyphosis without fracture (737.0, 737.1)
3. Treatment of secondary complications of kyphosis, including but not limited to reduced pulmonary function (518.89)
4. Other causes of pain, including but not limited to: herniated intervertebral disk (722.0 – 722.3)

D. Either vertebroplasty or kyphoplasty may be done per vertebra, but not both. If both are reported, one procedure will be denied.

References


Watts NB, Harris ST, Genant HK. Treatment of painful osteoporotic vertebral fractures with percutaneous vertebroplasty or kyphoplasty. *Osteoporos Int* 2001;12(6):429-437 (Jun)


*Consistent with Summary Plan Description (SPD). When there is discordance between this policy and the SPD, the provisions of the SPD prevail.*