Subject: Wireless Capsule Endoscopy*

Effective Date: September 2, 2003

Department(s): Utilization Management

Policy: Wireless capsule endoscopy (CPT 91110) for indications other than esophageal disease is reimbursable under Plans administered by QualCare, Inc., for indications specified below.

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

Procedure:

1. Indications-

   A. Crohn’s Disease-
      - Suspected Crohn’s disease with a history of abdominal pain, weight loss or diarrhea unexplained by upper and lower endoscopy.
      - Evaluating for suspected recurrence of small bowel Crohn’s Disease

   B. Evaluation of obscure gastrointestinal bleeding in individuals with one of the following: unexplained iron deficiency anemia, positive fecal occult blood on at least one occasion, or hematochezia (visible blood in the stool).
      
      AND
      
      Non-diagnostic upper and lower endoscopy studies.

2. All requests for wireless capsule endoscopy must be accompanied by reports of upper GI endoscopy and colonoscopy that have failed to reveal a gastrointestinal source of the symptoms, signs or blood loss.
3. Capsule endoscopy is not reimbursable for the following:

   a. As the initial test in evaluating GI blood loss
   b. As a screening test in any circumstance
   c. To confirm pathology identified by other means
   d. To evaluate esophageal (CPT 91111) or colonic disease

4. All requests for wireless capsule endoscopy are subject to medical review.

References


Krystallis C, Masterton GS, Hayes PC, Plevris JN. Update of endoscopy in liver disease: More than just treating varices. World J Gastroenterology 2012;18(5);401-411 (Feb)


Niv Y. Capsule endoscopy; No longer limited to the small bowel. IMAJ.2010;12(3):178-79.(Mar)


Lewis B, Goldfarb N. The advent of capsule endoscopy – a not-so-futuristic approach to obscure gastrointestinal bleeding. Aliment Pharmacol Ther 2003;17(9):1085-1096 (May)


Ell C, Remke S, May A et al. The first prospective controlled trial comparing wireless capsule endoscopy with push enteroscopy in chronic gastrointestinal bleeding. *Endoscopy* 2002;34(9): 685-689 (Sep)


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