

PROPHYLACTIC MASTECTOMY

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I. DESCRIPTION

Prophylactic mastectomy is an extirpative procedure (usually simple or total mastectomy) which removes all breast tissue which would be otherwise subject to breast carcinoma. Carefully selected indications have been developed for prophylactic mastectomy and are the subject of this policy.

II. POLICY

A. Bilateral prophylactic mastectomies are covered for patients at increased risk of developing breast carcinoma who have one or more of the following:

1. Atypical hyperplasia of lobular or ductal origin confirmed on biopsy; or
2. Family history of breast cancer in a first-degree relative (especially a mother or sister) who is premenopausal and has bilateral breast cancer (Family Cancer Syndrome); or
3. Fibronodular, dense breasts which are mammographically and/or clinically difficult to evaluate and the patient presents with either of the above (or both) clinical presentations.

B. Unilateral prophylactic mastectomies are covered when the contralateral breast has been diagnosed with cancer for patients with:

1. Diffuse microcalcifications in the remaining breast, especially when ductal in-situ carcinoma has been diagnosed in the contralateral breast; or
2. Lobular carcinoma in-situ; or
3. Large breast and/or ptotic, dense or disproportionately-sized breast that are difficult to evaluate mammographically and clinically; or
4. In whom observational surveillance is elected for lobular carcinoma in-situ and the patient develops either invasive lobular or ductal carcinoma; or

5. Family history of breast cancer in a first-degree relative (especially a mother or sister) who is premenopausal and has bilateral breast cancer (Family Cancer Syndrome).

C. Benefits will only be allowed for subcutaneous mastectomies performed as an alternative treatment for benign breast diseases if the individual is not at high risk of breast cancer.

III. EXCLUSION

Subcutaneous mastectomy, a procedure that is not extirpative, fails to remove all breast tissue. Therefore, subcutaneous mastectomy is not effective as prophylactic assurance against breast cancer in high risk indications, nor is subcutaneous mastectomy a cancer treatment. Therefore, benefits will not be allowed for subcutaneous mastectomy in the prevention of breast carcinoma. (From October 25, 1993, through the implementation date of this policy, subcutaneous mastectomy was listed as a covered benefit.) Claims processed during this time should not be recouped.

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