

SURGERY FOR MORBID OBESITY

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I. CPT¹ PROCEDURE CODE RANGE

43644, 43842, 43846, and 43848

II. DESCRIPTION

Morbid obesity means the body weight is 100 pounds over ideal weight for height and bone structure, according to the most current Metropolitan Life Table, and such weight is in association with severe medical conditions known to have higher mortality rates in association with morbid obesity; or, the body weight is 200 percent or more of ideal weight for height and bone structure.

III. POLICY

A. Gastric bypass, gastric stapling or gastroplasty, to include vertical banded gastroplasty is covered when one of the following conditions is met:

1. The patient is 100 pounds over the ideal weight for height and bone structure and has one of these associated medical conditions: diabetes mellitus, hypertension, cholecystitis, narcolepsy, Pickwickian syndrome (and other severe respiratory diseases), hypothalamic disorders and severe arthritis of the weight-bearing joints.

2. The patient is 200 percent or more of the ideal weight for height and bone structure. An associated medical condition is not required for this category.

3. The patient has had an intestinal bypass or other surgery for obesity and, because of complications, requires a second surgery (a takedown).

B. In determining the ideal body weight for morbid obesity using the Metropolitan Life Table, contractors must apply 100 pounds (or 200%) to both the lower and higher end of the weight range. Payment will be allowed when beneficiaries meet all requirements for morbid obesity surgery including the ideal weight within the newly determined range.

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IV. EXCLUSIONS

- A. Nonsurgical treatment of obesity, morbid obesity, dietary control or weight reduction.
- B. Biliopancreatic bypass (jejunioileal bypass, Scopinaro procedure) for treatment of morbid obesity **is unproven** (CPT² procedure code 43645, 43845, 43847 or 43633).
- C. Gastric bubble or balloon for treatment of morbid obesity **is unproven**.
- D. Gastric wrapping/gastric banding (CPT² procedure code 43843) for treatment of morbid obesity **is unproven**.
- E. **Laparoscopic bariatric surgical procedures.**
- F. Unlisted CPT² procedure codes 43659 (laparoscopy procedure, stomach); 43999 (open procedure, stomach); and 49329 (laparoscopy procedure, abdomen, peritoneum and omentum).

- END -

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