POLICY:

COVERAGE WILL BE ALLOWED for evaluation of the following:

- Acute limb ischemia;
- Chronic arterial occlusion with intermittent claudication;
- Chronic arterial occlusion with threatened limb loss caused by pain, ischemic ulceration or gangrene;
- Aneurysmal disease or suspected aneurysmal disease;
- Arterial embolism;
- Suspected injury to blood vessels of the extremity;
- Mechanical complications of vascular device, implant, graft, including suspected infection involving the extremities;
- Arteriovenous fistula or malformation involving the extremities;
- Complications of reattached extremity or body part;
- Ulcer of lower limbs;
- Impotence of organic origin
- Vascular disorders of penis;
- Evaluation of complications of angiographic access;
- Evaluation of the effect of sympathetic blocks;
- Suspected arteritis or vasculitis;
- Thrombotic microangiopathy; and,
- Pre-op evaluation to determine the level of amputation.

SPECIAL COMMENT ON FOLLOW-UP STUDIES:

Follow-up studies may be required at intervals as the patient's symptoms dictate. These intervals include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Intra-operative,
Postoperatively,
Continuous study method or monitoring, and
Annual follow-up studies.

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COVERAGE WILL BE ALLOWED FOR THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF MODALITIES:

• Indirect Methods – deriving data from extremities without imaging:
  ▪ The continuous wave Doppler Velocity detector;
  ▪ The direction sensing continuous wave Doppler with analog recordings;
  ▪ Volume plethysmography; and,
  ▪ Transcutaneous oxygen measurements (TcPO2) – The purpose of TcPO2 examination is to evaluate the local tissue perfusion. It may provide information for a more accurate diagnosis of distal perfusion, and the need for further invasive testing, reconstructive surgery, or the use of adjunctive Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy.

**NOTE:** Indirect methods are useful for initial screening and most follow-up studies.

• Direct Methods:
  ▪ Ultrasonic duplex scanning with or without color and
  ▪ B-mode ultrasonography and/or CT scanning, useful in assessing aneurysm size.

**NOTE:** With the availability of duplex scanning it is possible to recommend the use of this method as a second tier testing when patients are candidates for further intervention.

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SPECIAL COMMENT ON UNILATERAL STUDIES: The following studies will be allowed as necessary for recurrent symptoms:

• Duplex scan of lower extremity arteries or arterial bypass grafts and
• Duplex scan of upper extremity arteries or arterial bypass grafts

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COVERAGE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED for the following types of modalities:

• Thermography and
• Oscillometry.

DESCRIPTION:

Non-Invasive Extremity (Peripheral) Arterial Studies are methods of measuring blood flow in the arteries and capillaries without introduction of devices through the skin.
RATIONALE:

None

PRICING:

Separate reimbursement will be provided for TcPO2, when TcPO2 is the only noninvasive testing performed for the same date of service. When any other non-invasive test is performed on the same date of service, the TcPO2 will not be reimbursed separately.

The use of a simple hand held or other Doppler device THAT DOES NOT PRODUCE A HARD COPY OR THAT PRODUCES A RECORD THAT DOES NOT PERMIT ANALYSIS OF BIDIRECTIONAL VASCULAR FLOW is considered a part of the physical examination of the vascular system and is not covered separately.

DISCLAIMER:

State and federal law, as well as contract language, including definitions and specific inclusions/exclusions, takes precedence over Medical Policy and must be considered first in determining coverage. The member’s contract benefits in effect on the date that services are rendered must be used. Any benefits are subject to the payment of premiums for the date on which services are rendered. Medical technology is constantly evolving, and we reserve the right to review and update Medical Policy periodically.

HMO Blue Texas physicians who are contracted/affiliated with a capitated IPA/medical group must contact the IPA/medical group for information regarding HMO claims/reimbursement information and other general polices and procedures.

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