VISCERAL ARTERIAL STUDIES
MED202.022

POLICY:

Coverage will be allowed for the following indications, as ultrasonic duplex scanning is the only noninvasive method that can be used to adequately evaluate visceral blood flow in these conditions:

- **Renovascular Hypertension:**
  - Malignant hypertension,
  - Hypertension not controlled by drugs,
  - Patients in renal failure suspected of having underlying renal arterial disease.
  - After transluminal angioplasty and direct arterial surgery, and
  - Study of the renal arteries after transplantation for documentation of the basis for recurrent hypertension and/or renal failure.

  **NOTE:** The only non-invasive method that can be used to document the presence of renal artery stenosis is ultrasonic duplex scanning.

- **Chronic Mesenteric Ischemia:**
  - Patients with abdominal pain, diarrhea, and weight loss of uncertain origin, and
  - Evaluation of the results of transluminal angioplasty and direct arterial reconstruction.

  **NOTE:** The only non-invasive method that can be used to document the status of the mesenteric circulation is ultrasonic duplex scanning.

- **Portal Hypertension:**
  - Suspected portal vein thrombosis,
  - Documentation of patency of the inferior vena cava and portal vein before a shunting procedure,
  - Documentation of the direction of flow in the portal vein in patients with portal hypertension,
  - Documentation of patency of surgical shunts, and
  - Documentation of flow to the liver after transplantation.

  **NOTE:** The only non-invasive method to document the status of the portal circulation is ultrasonic duplex scanning.

**Special Comment on Follow-up Studies:** All repeat studies must be reviewed for individual consideration.

**NOTE:** The use of a simple hand held or other Doppler device that does not produce a hard copy output 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.

DESCRIPTION:

Non-Invasive Visceral Arterial Studies are methods of measuring blood flow in the arteries and veins of viscera without introduction of devices through the skin.

RATIONALE:

None

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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