CORNEAL TOPOGRAPHY/COMPUTER-ASSISTED PHOTOKERATOYSCOPY
OTH903.013

COVERAGE:

Corneal Topography/Computer-Assisted Photokeratoscopy MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE. However, no benefits will be allowed for this procedure when performed on the same day as an ophthalmologic assessment, which is billed separately. See Rationale section.

An evaluation using corneal topography may be necessary for:

- the accurate diagnosis and follow-up of certain corneal disorders, such as keratoconus,
- difficult contact lens fits, and
- pre-and postoperative assessment of the cornea (most commonly after refractive surgery).

DESCRIPTION:

Corneal topography describes measurements of the curvature of the cornea. Various techniques and instruments are available to measure corneal topography:

- The keratometer (also referred to as an ophthalmometer), the most commonly used instrument, projects an illuminated image onto a central area in the cornea. By measuring the distance between a pair of reflected points in both of the cornea’s two principal meridians, the keratometer can estimate the radius of curvature of two meridians.

  Limitations of this technique are that:

  1) the keratometer can only estimate the corneal curvature over a small percentage of its surface, and
  2) estimates are based on the frequently incorrect assumption that the cornea is spherical.

- The keratoscope is an instrument that reflects a series of concentric circular rings off the anterior corneal surface. Visual inspection of the shape and spacing of the concentric rings provides a qualitative assessment of topography. A photokeratoscope is a keratoscope equipped with a camera which can provide a permanent record of the corneal topography.

- Computer assisted photokeratoscopy is an alternative to keratometry or keratoscopy in measuring corneal curvature. This technique uses sophisticated image analysis programs to provide quantitative corneal topographic data. For example, computer based programs can combine with
keratoscopy to create graphic displays and high-resolution color-coded maps of the corneal surface.

RATIONALE:

Corneal Topography is part of the evaluation and management level of service or part of the general ophthalmology examination.

PRICING:

Even though the Corneal Topography may be necessary to obtain measurements of the cornea, these services are considered part of the Evaluation and Management/Ophthalmologic service and therefore should not be billed 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.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company
Southwest Texas HMO, Inc.* d/b/a HMO Blue® Texas
* Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Posted Jan. 7, 2003