COVERAGE:

Breast biopsy procedure(s) MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE in patients, over the age of 19, with nodularity of the breast(s).

Mastectomy for Gynecomastia MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE to remove glandular tissue of a male over the age of 19, when sufficient documentation to support the medical necessity is provided. Medical necessity is met when the patient has a documented history of a breast enlargement condition, has:

- not been attributed to obesity or medication (drugs) known to cause gynecomastia as a side effect;
- no known cause after adequate investigation;
- actual presence of glandular breast tissue that is symptomatic resulting in pain, discomfort, and/or mastitis;
- failed hormonal therapy or it is contraindicated; and
- persisted for one (1) or more years or if rapid growth has occurred in less than six (6) months.

SPECIAL COMMENT ON DOCUMENTATION: All confirmatory lab and pathology reports and/or progress notes must accompany any request or claim for mastectomy for gynecomastia procedures.

Mastectomy for Gynecomastia IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE due to obesity, adolescence, or for the reversible effects of drug treatment that can be discontinued. Removal of fatty tissue, by mastectomy or suction lipectomy, is considered cosmetic.

DESCRIPTION:

Mastectomy for Gynecomastia is a surgical procedure to remove breast glandular tissue from a male with enlarged breasts. Gynecomastia is the most common breast lesion in males, accounting for more than 65% of breast disorders in men.

Adolescent gynecomastia usually regresses spontaneously in two to three years. In adults, gynecomastia is associated with increasing age. It may be unilateral or bilateral. In rare cases, gynecomastia is caused by prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, illegal drugs, tumors or disease. Some adolescents and adults have fatty tissue on their chests that gives the appearance of gynecomastia. This condition is called pseudogynecomastia or false gynecomastia.

The indications for treatment are dependent on the prolonged presence of breast enlargement in the male patient. The hypertrophy of the breast tissue usually causes the patient to have a somewhat feminine
appearance. The enlarged breasts will often give distention and tightness to the breast, which can cause pain and discomfort. In addition, symptoms of true mastitis can occur. The possibility of cancer must be considered with breast enlargement in the adult male.

RATIONALE:

Gynecomastia is a benign enlargement of the male breast commonly occurring in healthy adolescent boys and in adults (50 to 80 years old). It may be a source of cosmetic and psychologic problems. The secondary forms usually require no therapy other than the removal of any identified inciting cause. Most of the idiopathic forms last only a few months and gradually disappear. In the secondary gynecomastia and idiopathic forms that present for longer than 12 months and when hormonal treatment fails, a mastectomy may be the next form of therapy.

If the gynecomastia is due to a disease or tumor, then the disease or tumor must be treated. Breast cancer is rare in males. If there is any question of cancer, a mammogram and biopsy will be performed prior to a mastectomy.

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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