



IMPROVING HEALTH CARE QUALITY

Appropriate Testing for Pharyngitis

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) collects data from our providers to measure and improve the quality of care our members receive. Appropriate Testing for Pharyngitis (CWP) is one aspect of care we measure in our quality programs. Quality measures evaluate a prior calendar year performance.

What We Measure

We capture the percentage of episodes for members ages 3 to 18 who were diagnosed with pharyngitis, dispensed an antibiotic and received a group A streptococcus (strep) test for the episode. A higher rate represents better performance, as in appropriate testing.

CWP is a Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measure. See the [National Committee for Quality Assurance \(NCQA\) website](#) for more details.

Why It Matters

Pharyngitis, or sore throat, is a leading cause of pediatric ambulatory care visits. It can be caused by bacterial strep infections, which are treated with antibiotics, or by viral infections. Proper testing for strep and treatment of pharyngitis can help prevent the spread of sickness. Testing also can reduce the unnecessary use of antibiotics for viral pharyngitis.

Eligible Population

Members ages 3 (as of July 1 before the measurement year) to 18 (as of June 30 of the measurement year) are included in this measure who:

- Had an outpatient or emergency department (ED) visit with only a diagnosis of pharyngitis
- Were dispensed an antibiotic for that episode of care



Exclusions: Members are excluded who:

- Were in Hospice any time during the measurement year
- Members who died any time during the measurement year

Tips to Consider

- Review and document the group A strep test in your records.
- Use correct procedure codes.
- Submit claims and encounter data in a timely manner.

How to Document

CWP data is collected through claims data only. Hybrid chart review doesn't apply. Include in our members' records:

- Date of service for an outpatient or ED visit with a diagnosis of pharyngitis
- Throat culture lab report
- Date and result of strep test with a diagnosis of pharyngitis
- Antibiotic prescription for the episode

For more information, see [NCQA's HEDIS Measures and Technical Resources](#).



Questions?

Contact your BCBSTX Network Representative.



The above material is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for the independent medical judgment of a physician or other health care provider. Physicians and other health care providers are encouraged to use their own medical judgment based upon all available information and the condition of the patient in determining the appropriate course of treatment. The fact that a service or treatment is described in this material is not a guarantee that the service or treatment is a covered benefit and members should refer to their certificate of coverage for more details, including benefits, limitations and exclusions. Regardless of benefits, the final decision about any service or treatment is between the member and their health care provider.

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