PROVIDER TYPES AFFECTED

Surgeons who perform bariatric surgery

BACKGROUND

Medicare Fee-For-Service and inpatient hospital services cover bariatric surgical procedures. Review provisions in National Coverage Determination (NCD) for BARIATRIC SURGERY for Treatment of Co-Morbid Conditions Related to Morbid Obesity (100.1).

REASONS FOR DENIAL

- Insufficient documentation
- Documentation fails to support procedures as reasonable or necessary
- Providers do not comply with signature requirements
HOW TO PREVENT DENIALS

Beneficiaries must meet the following Medicare coverage criteria:

- Body-mass index (BMI) of more than or equal to 35 kg/m²
- At least one comorbidity related to obesity
- Previously unsuccessful with medical treatment for obesity

Consider the following when billing Medicare for bariatric surgery services:

- Bariatric surgery procedures are performed to treat comorbid conditions associated with morbid obesity

Types of surgical procedures:

- **Malabsorptive**—Divert food from the stomach to a lower part of the digestive tract where the normal mixing of digestive fluids and absorption of nutrients cannot occur
- **Restrictive**—Restrict the size of the stomach and decrease intake
- Both types of procedures can be combined

Procedures include:

- **Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass (RYGBP)**
  - Gastric restriction and malabsorption; reduction of the stomach to a small gastric pouch (30 cc); open or laparoscopic
- **Biliopancreatic Diversion with Duodenal Switch (BPD/DS) or Gastric Reduction Duodenal Switch (BPD/GRDS)**
  - Gastric restriction and malabsorption; the stomach is partially resected, but the remaining capacity is generous compared to that achieved with RYGBP; open or laparoscopic
- **Adjustable Gastric Banding (AGB)**
  - Gastric restriction only; a band creating a gastric pouch with a capacity of approximately 15 to 30 ccs encircles the uppermost portion of the stomach; laparoscopic only
- **Sleeve Gastrectomy**
  - Sleeve resection of the stomach; open or laparoscopic
- **Vertical Gastric Banding (VGB)**
  - Gastric restriction only; the upper part of the stomach is stapled (rarely performed)
Non-covered:
- Treatments for obesity alone
- Supplemented fasting as a general treatment for obesity
- Open adjustable gastric banding
- Open and laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy (Medicare Administrative Contractors may determine coverage of stand-alone laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy)
- Open and laparoscopic vertical banded gastroplasty
- Intestinal bypass surgery
- Gastric balloon

RESOURCES

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<th>RESOURCE</th>
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<td>The 2017 Medicare Fee-For-Service Supplemental Improper Payment Date</td>
<td>[<a href="https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Da">https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Da</a> ta-and-Systems/Monitoring-Programs/Medi- care-FFS-Compliance-Programs/CERT/CERT-Re ports-Items/2017-Medicare-FFS-Payment-Data. html?DLPage=1&amp;DLEntries=10&amp;DLSort=0&amp;DLSort- Dir=descending](<a href="https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Da">https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Da</a> ta-and-Systems/Monitoring-Programs/Medi- care-FFS-Compliance-Programs/CERT/CERT-Re ports-Items/2017-Medicare-FFS-Payment-Data. html?DLPage=1&amp;DLEntries=10&amp;DLSort=0&amp;DLSort- Dir=descending)</td>
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<td>National Coverage Determination (NCD) for BARIATRIC SURGERY for Treatment of Co-Morbid Conditions Related to Morbid Obesity (100.1)</td>
<td>[<a href="https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/">https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/</a> details/ncd-details.aspx?NCDId=57&amp;ncdver=5&amp;- CoverageSelection=Both&amp;ArticleType=All&amp;Policy- Type=Final&amp;s=All&amp;KeyWord=Bariatric+Surgery&amp;Key- WordLookUp=Title&amp;KeyWordSearchType=And&amp;b- c=gAAAAACAAAAAAA%3d%3d&amp;](<a href="https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/">https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/</a> details/ncd-details.aspx?NCDId=57&amp;ncdver=5&amp;- CoverageSelection=Both&amp;ArticleType=All&amp;Policy- Type=Final&amp;s=All&amp;KeyWord=Bariatric+Surgery&amp;Key- WordLookUp=Title&amp;KeyWordSearchType=And&amp;b- c=gAAAAACAAAAAAA%3d%3d&amp;)</td>
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