



MASSACHUSETTS

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Medical Policy Endobronchial Valves

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Policy Number: 313

BCBSA Reference Number: 7.01.128

Related Policies

- Lung Volume Reduction Surgery for Severe Emphysema #[628](#)

Policy

Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, and Indemnity Medicare HMO BlueSM and Medicare PPO BlueSM Members

Endobronchial valves as a treatment of prolonged air leaks and/or for patients with COPD or emphysema is **INVESTIGATIONAL**:

Prior Authorization Information

Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS)

This is **NOT** a covered service.

Commercial Members: PPO, and Indemnity

This is **NOT** a covered service.

Medicare Members: HMO BlueSM

This is **NOT** a covered service.

Medicare Members: PPO BlueSM

This is **NOT** a covered service.

CPT Codes / HCPCS Codes / ICD-9 Codes

The following codes are included below for informational purposes. Inclusion or exclusion of a code does not constitute or imply member coverage or provider reimbursement. Please refer to the member's contract benefits in effect at the time of service to determine coverage or non-coverage as it applies to an individual member.

Providers should report all services using the most up-to-date industry-standard procedure, revenue, and diagnosis codes, including modifiers where applicable.

CPT Codes

CPT codes:	Code Description
31647	Bronchoscopy, rigid or flexible, including fluoroscopic guidance, when performed; with balloon occlusion, when performed, assessment of air leak, airway sizing, and insertion of bronchial valve(s), initial lobe
31648	Bronchoscopy, rigid or flexible, including fluoroscopic guidance, when performed; with removal of bronchial valve(s), initial lobe
31649	Bronchoscopy, rigid or flexible, including fluoroscopic guidance, when performed; with removal of bronchial valve(s), each additional lobe (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
31651	Bronchoscopy, rigid or flexible, including fluoroscopic guidance, when performed; with balloon occlusion, when performed, assessment of air leak, airway sizing, and insertion of bronchial valve(s), each additional lobe (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure[s])

ICD-9 Diagnosis Codes

Investigational for the diagnoses described in the medical policy statement.

Description

An endobronchial valve is a synthetic device deployed with bronchoscopy into ventilatory airways of the lung to control air flow into an affected lung area by closing during inhalation to prevent the movement of air into that area subsequently preventing a pneumothorax (air leak into the pleural space). The valve opens during exhalation to allow air to escape.

Endobronchial valves have been investigated for use in patients who have prolonged broncho-pleural air leaks, as well as an alternative to lung volume reduction surgery (LVRS) in patients with lobar hyperinflation from severe emphysema.

Examples of endobronchial valves for the treatment of any indication include the IBV® Valve System and the Zephyr Endobronchial Valve. All endobronchial valves for the treatment of any indication are considered investigational regardless of the commercial name, the manufacturer or FDA approval status.

Summary

The only available data on endobronchial valves for treating air leaks are uncontrolled trials with small numbers of heterogeneous patients. Data on the FDA-approved endobronchial valve device are particularly limited. A recent case series using the FDA-approved valves for treating air leaks reported on 9 patients; valves were successfully placed in 7 of them. Case series and a single unblinded RCT on endobronchial valves for the off-label treatment of patients with advanced emphysema provide insufficient evidence that the technology improves the net health outcome. In this trial, there were marginal benefits that may not be clinically meaningful, and the adverse events experienced by patients who received endobronchial valves raise concerns about the safety of the treatment. Given the limitations of the data, endobronchial valve placement for treatment of prolonged air leaks or emphysema is considered investigational.

Policy History

Date	Action
5/2014	New references from BCBSA National medical policy.
4/2013	New references from BCBSA National medical policy.
2/2012	Updated to add new CPT codes 31648, 31649 and 31651. Remove deleted CPT codes 0250T-0252T.

11/2011-4/2012	Medical policy ICD 10 remediation: Formatting, editing and coding updates. No changes to policy statements.
4/2011	Reviewed - Medical Policy Group – Cardiology and Pulmonology. No changes to policy statements.
2/2/2011	New policy, effective 2/2/2011 describing ongoing non-coverage.

Information Pertaining to All Blue Cross Blue Shield Medical Policies

Click on any of the following terms to access the relevant information:

[Medical Policy Terms of Use](#)

[Managed Care Guidelines](#)

[Indemnity/PPO Guidelines](#)

[Clinical Exception Process](#)

[Medical Technology Assessment Guidelines](#)

References

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4. Scirba FC, Ernst A, Herth FJ et al. A randomized study of endobronchial valves for advanced emphysema. *N Engl J Med* 2010; 363(13):1233-44.
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