

MEDICAL POLICY

POLICY TITLE	PROCEDURES OF QUESTIONABLE CURRENT USEFULNESS
POLICY NUMBER	MP-4.009

Effective Date:	7/1/2022
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I. POLICY

Capital Blue Cross considers the following procedures and diagnostic lab tests to be of “Questionable Current Usefulness” and are considered obsolete or discredited and **not medically necessary** unless medical necessity can be established on an individual basis. (See definitions.)

For the procedures listed as **investigational**, there is insufficient evidence to support a conclusion concerning the health outcomes or benefits associated with this the procedure.

The following list is **not** an all-inclusive list. Capital Blue Cross will continually add any obsolete procedures or diagnostic tests:

Medical Policy Service List	Obsolete (Outdated)/ Discredited/ Investigational	Rationale	Reference(s)
Anastomosis, arterial, extracranial-intracranial (e.g., middle cerebral/cortical) arteries 61711	Discredited for when used to treat or prevent cerebral ischemia in patients with arteriosclerotic disease in carotid and middle cerebral arteries	The Intra/Extracranial Anastomosis performed on patients to treat or prevent cerebral ischemia in patients with arteriosclerotic disease in the carotid and middle cerebral arteries was found to have no benefit over medical therapy for preventing recurrent strokes.	<i>Powers WJ, Clarke WR, Grubb, RL et al. Extracranial-Intracranial Bypass Surgery for Stroke Prevention in Hemodynamic Cerebral Ischemia: The Carotid Occlusion Surgery Study Randomized Trial. JAMA.2011; 306(18):1983-1992. doi: 10.1001/jama.2011.1610. [Website]: http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1104607 Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Animal inoculation, small animal; with observation and dissection 87003	Obsolete	The inoculation of animals is primarily to isolate certain viruses when the use of a living organism is of importance. It is	<i>Sagar, Aryal MD. (May 2015). Techniques of Virus Cultivation. [Animal Inoculation]. [Website]: http://www.microbiologyinfo.com/techniques-of-virus-cultivation/. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>

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		expensive to accrue and maintain, difficult, and there are a lot of issues pertaining to animal welfare.	
Arsenic testing by means other than urine testing and for reason(s) other than suspected acute or chronic environmental exposure. 82175	Obsolete	Measurement of arsenic levels in urine is preferable to blood, since blood arsenic is cleared rapidly	<i>Goldman RH, Arsenic Exposure and Poisoning. In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated October 8, 2020. [Website]: www.uptodate.com Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Bolen's test for cancer /Clot retraction study (CRT) 85170	Discredited	This test is considered dated and nonspecific; it has largely been replaced with more sophisticated methods in most labs	<i>Street T, Clot Retraction. Updated 3/19/14. [Website]: http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/2085066-overview#a4. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Brain imaging, limited or complete procedure; static 78600, 78601, 78605, 78606	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced testing	<i>Wong E, Wu J, Overview of the Clinical Features and Diagnosis of Brain Tumors in adults. In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated Dec 07, 2021 [Website]: www.uptodate.com. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Cardionetegram (or omnicardiogram) S9025	Discredited	The omnicardiogram cannot be considered a useful technique for predicting the presence or severity of coronary artery disease or for the identification of abnormal left ventricular function in patients with known coronary artery disease	<i>Redy K, Smithline F, Zenan, BT et al. Failure of the omnicardiogram to predict coronary artery disease in patients with normal resting electrocardiograms. Unbound Medline. Journal of electrocardiology 8:1 1975 Jan pg 13-6.</i>
Cellular Therapy M0075	Discredited	Cellular therapy is currently without scientific or statistical evidence to document	<i>Unproven methods of cancer management: Issels combination therapy. CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians, 1972. 22: 188–191.</i>

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		its therapeutic efficacy and, in fact, is considered a potentially dangerous practice	<i>doi: 10.3322/canjclin.22.3.188 [Website]: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.3322/canjclin.22.3.188/abstract. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Cephalin flocculation P2028	Obsolete	An obsolete liver-function test based on crude estimates of the albumin: globulin ratio, supplanted by electrophoresis and other more specific methods.	<i>Segen's Medical Dictionary. © 2012 Farlex, Inc. All rights reserved. Cephalin-cholesterol flocculation test [Website]: http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/cephalin-cholesterol+flocculation+test Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Chemonucleolysis 62292	Discredited	In January 2003 the FDA halted the sale and distribution of chymopapain in the United States. It was found to cause serious side effects at a higher-than-expected rate	<i>Simmons JW, Fraser RD. The rise and fall of chemonucleolysis. In Arthroscopic and Endoscopic Spinal Surgery 2005 (pp. 351-358). Humana Press.</i>
Coccygectomy, primary 27080	Discredited	Results of effectiveness from randomized trials are not available and there is a risk of serious complications, including infection and hematoma.	<i>Fletcher R. Coccydynia (coccygodynia) In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated Dec 07, 2021 [Website]: www.uptodate.com. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Congo Red Blood P2029	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced testing	<i>Ouchi E, Normura N, Watabe, S et al. Clinical significance of Congo red test. Tohoku J Exp Med. 1976; 118 Suppl: 191-8. PMID:964024</i>
Contrast or chain urethroscystography (including injection procedure 74455, 51605	Obsolete	Replaced with ultrasound scanning.	<i>Gordon D, Pearce M, et al, Comparison of Ultrasound and Lateral Chain Urethroscystography in the Determination of Bladder Neck Descent. American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Volume 160, Issue 1, January 1989. Pages 182-185.</i>

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Cystotomy or cystotomy with cryosurgery, fulguration and/ or insertion of radioactive material 51020, 52010	Obsolete	Cystourethroscopy has replaced cystotomy or cystostomy for cryosurgery or fulguration of bladder lesions. Although cystourethroscopy can be used to deliver radioactive substances to the bladder (intravesical brachytherapy), current evidence-based guidelines do not list brachytherapy as an established treatment for bladder cancer	<i>National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). NG2. Bladder Cancer: Diagnosis and Management. London, UK: NICE; February 2015. [Website]: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng2 Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Cystourethroscopy with insertion of radioactive substance 52250	Obsolete	Although cystourethroscopy can be used to deliver radioactive substances to the bladder (intravesical brachytherapy), current evidence-based guidelines do not list brachytherapy as an established treatment for bladder cancer	<i>National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). NG2. Bladder Cancer: Diagnosis and Management. London, UK: NICE; February 2015. [Website]: http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng2/evidence. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Displacement therapy (Proetz type) 30210	Obsolete	Not listed as a treatment option in professional ENT guidelines.	<i>Otolaryngology Head and Neck. Clinical practice guideline: (update) April 2015. Adult sinusitis. [Website]: http://oto.sagepub.com/content/152/2_suppl/S1.full. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Excision, coccygeal pressure ulcer, with coccygectomy; with primary suture 15920	Discredited	Results of effectiveness from randomized trials are not available and there is a substantial complication rate with this procedure.	<i>Fletcher R. Coccydynia (coccygodynia) In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated January 25, 2018. [Website]: www.uptodate.com Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>

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Heart catheterization by left ventricular puncture* 93462 * Does not apply to atrial puncture.	Obsolete*	This technique is rarely used and carries significant excess risk	<i>Morton K, Cardiac Catheterization Techniques: Normal Hemodynamics. In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated November 1, 2019 [Website]: www.uptodate.com. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Incisional biopsy of the prostate 55705	Obsolete	Transrectal ultrasound-guided core needle biopsy has replaced incisional biopsy of the prostate for diagnosis of prostate cancer.	<i>National Comprehensive Care Network (NCCN). NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology. Prostate Cancer [Website]: http://www.nccn.org/professionals/physician_gls/pdf/prostate.pdf. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Interruption, partial or complete of femoral vein, by ligature, intravascular device (when performed to treat post-phlebitis syndrome) 37650	Discredited	Older methods of venous intervention were reported to have inferior results. Newer procedures are not well studied in trials that specifically evaluate outcomes in patients with post-thrombotic syndrome.	<i>Alguire P, Mathes BI Post-thrombotic (postphlebotic) Syndrome. In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated March 9, 2020[Website]: www.uptodate.com. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Laetrile and related substances (e.g., amygdalin, Sarcocarpinase, vitamin B-17, and nitriloside) J3570	Discredited	The FDA has determined that neither Laetrile nor any other drug called by the various terms mentioned above, nor any other product which might be characterized as a "nitriloside" is generally recognized (by experts qualified by scientific training and experience to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of drugs) to be safe and effective for any therapeutic use.	<i>Milazzo S, Horneber M. Laetrile Treatment for Cancer. Cochrane Library. 10/31/14. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD005476.pub4. [Website]: http://cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD005476.pub4/abstract Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>

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Masters 2 Step S3904	Discredited	Testing results inferior to other more technologically advanced methods	<i>Horlick L. A Clinical Re-Evaluation of Master's Two Step Test. Can Med Assoc J. 1959 Jan 1; 80(1): 9-13.</i>
Mechanical fragility test, red blood cells 85547	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques.	<i>Gu, L, Smith W, Chaztimavroudis G Mechanical Fragility Calibration of Red Blood Cells. ASAIO Journal. 2005 May; 51 (3): 194-201 PMID: 15968947</i>
Mucoprotein, blood (seromuroid) P2038	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques	<i>Lubege J, Davies T, A comparison of serum mucoprotein with serum alpha 1 acid glycoprotein, haptoglobin, and alpha 1 antitrypsin assays in monitoring inflammatory bowel disease. Clin Chim Acta. 1990 Apr 13;188(1):59-69 PMID:2347083</i>
Oxygen uptake, expired gas analysis rest, indirect (separate procedure) [Indirect calorimetry] 94690	Not Medically Necessary	Additional research is needed to determine the long-term efficacy of using oxygen uptake as part of a comprehensive weight control program.	<i>McDoniel SO, Nelson HA, Thomson CA. Employing RMR technology in a 90-day weight control program. Obes Facts. 2008;1(6):298-304.</i>
Phonocardiogram 93799	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques	<i>Rangayyan R, Phonocardiogram signal analysis: a review. Crit Rev Biomed Eng. 1987; 15(3):211-36. PMID:3329595</i>
Prostatotomy for external drainage of prostate abscess 55720, 55725	Obsolete	Transurethral evacuation or transperineal aspiration replaced prostatotomy as the standard method of drainage of a prostatic abscess.	<i>Meyrier A, Thomas F Acute bacterial prostatitis. In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated October, 2021 [Website]: www.uptodate.com. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Pulsed irrigation and evacuation systems E0350, E0352	Not Medically Necessary	Limited comparative studies and insufficient evidence to support effectiveness	<i>Lyons BL, Korsten MA, Spungen AM, et al. Comparison between pulsed irrigation enhanced evacuation and polyethylene glycol-electrolyte lavage solution for bowel preparation prior to</i>

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			<p><i>elective colonoscopy in veterans with spinal cord injury. J Spinal Cord Med. 2015; 38(6):805-811. doi:10.1179/2045772314Y.0000000256</i></p> <p>https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4725814/ Accessed February 25, 2022</p>
Rehfuß test for gastric acidity; Gastric intubation and aspiration, diagnostic; single specimen (e.g., acid analysis) 43754	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques	<p><i>Rosenfield L Gastric tubes, meals, acid, and analysis: rise and decline Clinical Chemistry 43:5 837–842 (1997)</i></p> <p>[Website]: http://www.clinchem.org/content/43/5/837.full.pdf+html Accessed February 11, 2022.</p>
Serum glutamate dehydrogenase 82965	Discredited	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques	<p><i>Jenkins W, Rosalki S, Foo S, et al. Serum glutamate dehydrogenase is not a reliable marker of liver cell necrosis in alcoholics. J Clin Pathol 1982;35:207-210 doi:10.1136/jcp.35.2.207</i></p>
Sympathectomy, lumbar (when performed to treat hypertension) 64818	Obsolete	Significant operative morbidity and mortality and unwanted side effects that, together with the advent of more effective antihypertensive medications, led to abandonment of this procedure in the early 1970s.	<p><i>Bertog S, Sobotka P, Horst S. Renal Denervation for Hypertension. J Am Coll Cardiol Interv. 2012;5(3):249-258. March 2012. doi:10.1016/j.jcin.2011.12.011</i></p> <p>[Website]: http://interventions.onlinejacc.org/article.aspx?articleid=1207259. Accessed February 11, 2022.</p>
Sympathectomy, thoracolumbar (when performed to treat hypertension) 64809	Obsolete	Significant operative morbidity and mortality and unwanted side effects that, together with the advent of more effective antihypertensive medications, led to	<p><i>Bertog S, Sobotka P, Horst S. Renal Denervation for Hypertension. J Am Coll Cardiol Interv. 2012; 5(3):249-258. March 2012. doi:10.1016/j.jcin.2011.12.011</i></p> <p>[Website]:</p>

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		abandonment of this procedure in the early 1970s.	http://interventions.onlinejacc.org/article.aspx?articleid=1207259 Accessed February 11, 2022.
Thymol turbidity, blood P2033	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques	<i>Hazout S, Lockhart M, Taillefer H, Philippon C, Valleron AJ, Dhumeaux D. The thymol turbidity test and determination of serum cholesterol: two tests to abandon in the routine evaluation of liver function. Biomedicine. 1978; 28(5):288-292 PMID 743555.</i>
Transection or avulsion of phrenic nerve 64746	Discredited	This approach to treatment for hiccups may be associated with considerable morbidity and is not universally successful. A Cochrane review concluded that the available evidence was insufficient to guide treatment of persistent or intractable hiccups by either pharmacologic or nonpharmacologic means.	<i>Wilkes G, Hiccups Treatment and Management [Website]:</i> http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/775746-treatment#d1 . Updated Dec 29, 2017 Accessed February 11, 2022.
Uterine suspension, with or without shortening of round ligaments, with or without shortening of sacrouterine ligaments 58400	Discredited	Round ligament suspension is not effective in treating uterine or vaginal prolapse.	<i>Kenton K. Pelvic organ prolapse in women: surgical repair or apical prolapse (uterine or vaginal vault prolapse). In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated January 7, 2022, [Website]: www.uptodate.com. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Uterine suspension, with or without shortening of round ligaments,	Discredited	The evidence on laparoscopic uterine nerve ablation (LUNA) for chronic pelvic pain suggests that it is not	<i>National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). Laparoscopic uterine nerve ablation (LUNA) for chronic pelvic pain</i>

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with or without shortening of sacrouterine ligaments; with presacral sympathectomy (presacral neurectomy) 58410		efficacious and therefore should not be used.	<i>Issued: October 2007</i> London, UK: NICE; [Website]: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ipg234/chapter/1-guidance Accessed February 11, 2022
Narcosynthesis for psychiatric diagnostic and therapeutic purposes (e.g., sodium amobarbital (Amytal) interview)	Obsolete	No longer approved by the FDA and this therapy is no longer provided, NDC 0187-4303-05	https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/ndc/dsp_searchresult.cfm Accessed February 11, 2022

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The following labs and services use unlisted (unspecific) CPT codes.

Medical Policy Service List	Obsolete (Outdated)/ Discredited/ Investigational	Rationale	Reference(s)
Bendien's Test for cancer and tuberculosis 86849	Obsolete	No longer in use, Replaced by more technologically advanced testing	<i>Bendien's Diagnostic Methods for Cancer and Principles of Treatment. JAMA. 1932; 98(5):423. doi:10.1001/jama.1932.02730310063034</i>

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Calcium, feces, 24-hour quantitative 84999	Obsolete	Replaced by quantitative stool for fat	<i>Christensen R, Lorenzen JK, Svith CR, et al. Effect of calcium from dairy and dietary supplements on faecal fat excretion: a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. [Website]: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19493303 Accessed February 11, 2022</i>
Calcium saturation clotting time 85999	Obsolete	No longer used, Replaced by more technologically advanced testing	<i>Glazki A, Effect of Blood Protease and Trypsin Inhibitor on the Clotting Mechanism. J Clin Invest. 1947 May; 26(3): 364–369. doi: 10.1172/JCI101818 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC439159/. Accessed February 11, 2022</i>
Cervicography 58999	Discredited	In February 1999 the Department of Preventive Medicine, and Biometrics, published findings that cytologic testing performed better than cervicography for the detection of high-grade squamous intraepithelial lesions.	<i>Schneider DL, Herrero R, Bratti, C et al. Cervicography screening for cervical cancer among 8460 women in a high-risk population. Am J Obstet Gynecol 1999; 180(2 pt 1):290-8. PMID: 9988789</i>
Chymotrypsin, duodenal contents 84999	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced testing	<i>Assessing Medical Technologies, Institute of Health. National Academy Press. Washington DC. 1985.</i>

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Circulation time 85999	Discredited	Results unpredictable. Replaced by more technologically advanced testing	<i>A Comparison Between Objective and Subjective Methods. Circulation 1958; 17:922-926 doi: 10.1161/01.CIR.17.5.922 [Website]: http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/circulationaha/17/5/922.full.pdf Accessed February 11, 2022</i>
Colloidal gold spinal test. Lange's colloidal gold test. 82664	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced testing	Mellanby J. The Precipitation of Colloidal Gold by Cerebrospinal Fluid. The diagnosis of neuro- Syphilis. April 9, 1923. [Website]: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1584664/pdf/canmedaj00331-0031.pdf . Accessed February 11, 2022
Eustachian tube inflation; transnasal; with catheterization 69799	Investigational	Evidence of benefit has not been established	<i>Poe D, Bassam H. Eustachian tube dysfunction In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated October 10, 2019. [Website]: www.uptodate.com. Accessed February 11, 2022.</i>
Gastric analysis, pepsin 84999	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced testing	<i>Hirschowitz BI, A Critical Analysis, with Appropriate Controls, of Gastric Acid and Pepsin Secretion in Clinical Esophagitis. Gastroenterology. 1991 Nov;101(5):1149-58.PMID: 1936784 [Website]: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/1936784 Accessed February 11, 2022</i>

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Gastric analysis, tubeless 84999	Discredited	No longer in use. Replaced by more accurate testing methods including gastric pH monitoring	<i>Rosenfeld L, Gastric Tubes, Meals, Acid and Analysis: Rise and Decline. Clinical Chemistry May 1997 vol. 43 no. 5 837-842.</i> [Website]: http://www.clinchem.org/content/43/5/837.full Accessed February 11, 2022.
Guanase, blood 84999	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced testing	(NCD) 300.1 Obsolete or Unreliable Diagnostic Tests Accessed February 11, 2022
Phonocardiogram 93799	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques	Rangayyan R. Phonocardiogram signal analysis: a review. Crit Rev Biomed Eng. 1987; 15(3):211-36. PMID:3329595 Accessed February 11, 2022
Skin test, brucellosis 86486	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced testing targeting brucellosis.	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Brucellosis. Last reviewed and updated 12/4/2014. [Website]: http://www.cdc.gov/brucellosis/index.html . Accessed February 11, 2022
Skin test, cat scratch fever 86486	Outdated	The cat scratch skin test, one of the original four criteria for diagnosis of CSD, is no longer used since other more specific and sensitive diagnostic tools are preferred	<i>Spach D, Sheldon K Microbiology, epidemiology, clinical manifestations, and diagnosis of cat scratch disease.</i> <i>In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated October 27, 2021.</i> [Website]: www.uptodate.com . Accessed February 11, 2022
Skin test, psittacosis 86486	Obsolete	Not the preferred test for this condition	<i>Richards M. Psittacosis</i> <i>In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated April 9, 2021.</i> [Website]: www.uptodate.com . Accessed February 11, 2022

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Skin test, trichinosis 86486	Obsolete	Not the preferred test for this condition	<i>Weller P, Leder K. Trichinellosis In: UpToDate Online Journal [serial online]. Waltham, MA: UpToDate; updated October 7, 2020. [Website]: www.uptodate.com. Accessed February 11, 2022</i>
Speculoscopy 58999	Discredited	Kaiser Permanente Medical Center (Anaheim, CA) conducted a study in 1995 showing that colposcopy is better suited than speculoscopy to the follow-up of patients with abnormal cervical cytology; because, it facilitates lesion grading and assists in directing biopsies.	<i>Lonky NM, Mann WJ, et al. Ability of visual tests to predict underlying cervical neoplasia. Colposcopy and speculoscopy; J Reprod Med. 1995 Jul;40(7):530-6; PMID: 7473444</i>
Starch, feces, screening 89240	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques	<i>Davidson M, Bauer C. The Value of Microscopic Examination of the Stool for Extracellular Starch in the Diagnosis of Starch Intolerance. Pediatrics Vol. 21 No. 4 April 1, 1958 pp. 565 -572</i>
Vectorcardiogram; interpretation and report only. 93799	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques.	<i>Yang H, Bukkapatnam S, Komanduri R. Spatiotemporal representation of cardiac vectorcardiogram (VCG) signals. BioMedical Engineering OnLine 2012, 11:16 doi: 10.1186/1475-925X-11-16 [Website]: http://www.biomedical-engineering-online.com/content/11/1/16. Accessed February 11, 2022</i>

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Zinc sulphate turbidity, blood 89240	Obsolete	Replaced by more technologically advanced techniques.	<i>Zinc sulfate turbidity test. Segen's Medical Dictionary. © 2012 Farlex, Inc. All rights reserved. [Website]: http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/zinc+sulfate+turbidity+test Accessed February 11, 2022</i>
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II. PRODUCT VARIATIONS

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This policy is only applicable to certain programs and products administered by Capital Blue Cross please see additional information below, and subject to benefit variations as discussed in Section VI below.

FEP PPO: Refer to FEP Medical Policy Manual. The FEP Medical Policy manual can be found at: <https://www.fepblue.org/benefit-plans/medical-policies-and-utilization-management-guidelines/medical-policies>

III. DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND

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A procedure that is considered obsolete, outdated, or discredited is considered a Procedure of Questionable Current Usefulness (POQCU).

IV. RATIONALE

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See specific procedure or test in table above.

V. DEFINITIONS

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DISCREDITED – found to be ineffective or not medically necessary.

MEDICAL NECESSITY - Capital defines “medical necessity or medically necessary” to mean the following:

- Services or supplies that a physician exercising prudent clinical judgment would provide to a Plan Member for the diagnosis and/or the direct care and treatment of the Plan Member’s medical condition, disease, illness, or injury that are necessary; and
- In accordance with accepted standards of good medical practice; and

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- Clinically appropriate for the Plan Member’s condition, disease, illness, or injury; and
- Not primarily for the convenience of the Plan Member and/or Plan Member’s family, physician, or other health care provider; and
- Not more costly than alternative services or supplies at least as likely to produce equivalent results for the Plan Member’s condition, disease, illness or injury.

For these purposes, “generally accepted standards of good medical practice” means standards that are based on credible scientific evidence published in peer-reviewed medical literature generally recognized by the relevant medical community, national Physician Specialty Society recommendations, and the views of Physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas and any other clinically relevant factors.

OBSOLETE - replaced by newer technology

VI. BENEFIT VARIATIONS

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The existence of this medical policy does not mean that this service is a covered benefit under the member’s health benefit plan. Benefit determinations should be based in all cases on the applicable health benefit plan language. Medical policies do not constitute a description of benefits. A member’s health benefit plan governs which services are covered, which are excluded, which are subject to benefit limits and which require preauthorization. There are different benefit plan designs in each product administered by Capital Blue Cross. Members and providers should consult the member’s health benefit plan for information or contact Capital Blue Cross for benefit information.

VII. DISCLAIMER

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Capital Blue Cross’s medical policies are developed to assist in administering a member’s benefits, do not constitute medical advice, and are subject to change. Treating providers are solely responsible for medical advice and treatment of members. Members should discuss any medical policy related to their coverage or condition with their provider and consult their benefit information to determine if the service is covered. If there is a discrepancy between this medical policy and a member’s benefit information, the benefit information will govern. If a provider or a member has a question concerning the application of this medical policy to a specific member’s plan of benefits, please contact Capital Blue Cross’ Provider Services or Member Services. Capital Blue Cross considers the information contained in this medical policy to be proprietary and it may only be disseminated as permitted by law.

VIII. CODING INFORMATION

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Note: This list of codes may not be all-inclusive, and codes are subject to change at any time. The identification of a code in this section does not denote coverage as coverage is determined by the terms of member benefit information. In addition, not all covered services are eligible for separate reimbursement.

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*For related **Procedure Codes**, see coding information within the table of procedures located in the [POLICY](#) section above.

IX. REFERENCES

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1. *American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2011 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company [Website]: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com>. Accessed November 8, 2018.*

X. POLICY HISTORY

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MP 4.009	6/29/04 CAC
	7/26/05 CAC
	8/30/05 CAC
	7/25/06 CAC
	10/31/06 CAC
	9/25/07 CAC
	5/27/08 CAC
	11/25/08 CAC
	Added Micronutrient testing to list of procedures and laboratory tests of questionable current usefulness.
	4/26/11 CAC Minor revision. Policy updated with additional obsolete procedures and tests.
	7/30/13 CAC. Consensus review. References updated but no changes to the policy statements.
	12/23/2013 New 2014 code added to policy
	3/25/14 CAC. 3/25/14 Consensus. No change to policy statements. References updated. Deleted codes removed from policy
	11/1/14 Admin: Added Laetrile and related substances (e.g., amygdalin, Sarcocarpinase, vitamin B-17, and nitriloside) to the list of procedures of questionable current usefulness. Reference and code update.
	3/24/15 CAC. Consensus review. No changes to the policy statements. References updated. Coding reviewed.
9/29/15 CAC. Major review. Removed the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal inoculation -code 87001 is deleted. Code 87003 – animal inoculation with observation and dissection remains 	

MEDICAL POLICY

POLICY TITLE	PROCEDURES OF QUESTIONABLE CURRENT USEFULNESS
POLICY NUMBER	MP-4.009

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cerebrospinal fluid flow 78647. See MP 5.031 Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography. (SPECT) • Craniectomy for implantation of neurostimulator procedures – see MP 1.042 Deep Brain Stimulation. Codes 61863, 61864, 61867, 61868 • Craniotomy for lobotomy including cigulotomy • Dynamic posturography – See MP 2.011 Dynamic Posturography • Fascia lata graft for back pain. • Penile revascularization 37788 – see MP 2.016 Erectile Dysfunction • Micronutrient Testing – See MP 2.333 Intracellular Micronutrient Analysis Intracellular • Radiation procedures – NIA managing all radiation therapy effective 1/1/16. • Skin tests except for cat scratch, brucellosis, psittacosis, trichinosis. <p>Added the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemonucleolysis. 62292 • Bioelectrical impedance analysis whole body composition assessment. 0358T <p>Other changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arsenic (changed to “arsenic testing other than urine testing for suspected chronic arsenic poisoning”) • Chromium (changed to Chromium testing other than blood test for environmental exposure within 1-2 days) <p>Rationale added. References updated. Coding reviewed.</p>
	<p>8/1/16 Administrative Update: P2031 removed from policy reference and information moved to MP 2.327 Drug Testing in Pain Management and Substance Abuse Treatment Setting.</p>
	<p>1/1/17: Admin update. Product variation section updated.</p>
	<p>9/27/16 CAC Minor review. Added 0300 & 0300T related to ESWT for wound healing as investigational. Added 0286T related to near-infrared studies of lower extremity wounds and 0287T related to near-infrared guidance for vascular access as investigational. References updated. Rationales reviewed. Coding reviewed.</p>
	<p>2/6/17 Administrative update. Removed end dated codes 0286T & 0287T; replaced with 76499.</p>
	<p>1/1/18 Administrative update. Removed 0299T, 0300T, & 0358T; addressed in Medical Policy 4.002 (Experimental and Investigational). Medicare coverage information removed from procedure table in policy section.</p>
	<p>1/5/18 Consensus review. No change to policy statements. References updated. Rationale reviewed.</p>
	<p>5/11/18 Minor review. Removed codes 44680 and 38530 and related procedure information from policy. Coding Reviewed.</p>
	<p>11/6/18 Minor review. Added oxygen uptake, expired gas analysis at rest, indirect, (94690) as investigational.</p>

MEDICAL POLICY

POLICY TITLE	PROCEDURES OF QUESTIONABLE CURRENT USEFULNESS
POLICY NUMBER	MP-4.009

	<p>5/11/19 Minor review. Multiple changes to tables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added Narcosynthesis for psychiatric diagnostic and therapeutic purposes (e.g., sodium amobarbital (Amytal) interview) 90865 as Obsolete • Removed 82495 – Chromium (82495) managed by lab vendor; Amylase – More specific code available and managed by lab vendor • Removed Calcium, feces, 24-hour (84999); quantitative Chymotrypsin, duodenal contents (84999) • Removed Capillary fragility test 85599 (code is 85547) • Removed near-infrared spectroscopy for wounds and near-infrared guidance (76499) – both have T codes referenced on 4.002
	<p>1/16/20 Minor review. Added Cervicography and Speculoscopy to the table with code 58999. Effective 5/1/2020.</p>
	<p>6/1/20- Administrative review. Code J1429 added to the policy. Product Variation, Benefit Variation, and Disclaimer updated.</p>
	<p>1/25/21 Consensus review. Removed injection, golodirsen (currently listed on a medical policy specific to this drug [see: Golodirsen]). References updated.</p>
	<p>2/25/2022 Minor review. Added Pulsed irrigation evacuation as NMN. Updated references.</p>

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