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## SHP Bulking Agents for Vocal Cord Insufficiency

AUTH: SHP Medical 153 v5 (AC)

**MCG Health**  
Ambulatory Care  
25th Edition

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### Coverage

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See the appropriate benefit document for specific coverage determination. Member specific benefits take precedence over medical policy.

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### Application to Products

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- Policy is applicable to all products.

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### Authorization Requirements

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Pre-certification by the Plan is required.

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### Description of Item or Service

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- Bulking agents are substances in the form of a gel like product used to fill in gaps for indications of vocal cord paralysis, weak vocal cords or other vocal insufficiencies.
- Bulking agents for Vocal cord insufficiency include the harvesting and injection of autologous fat.
- Bulking agents for Unilateral vocal cord paralysis (UVCP) include the use of FDA approve vocal cord implants.
- Types of bulking agents may include, but are not limited to:
  - Calcium hydroxylapatite (e.g., Radiesse™ Voice, Prolaryn™ Plus)
  - Collagen
  - Cymetra (micronized AlloDerm tissue)
  - Restylane (cross-linked hyaluronic acid)
  - Prolaryn and Prolaryn Plus (formerly the Radiesse Laryngeal Implant).

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### Exceptions and Limitations

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There is insufficient scientific evidence to support the medical necessity of bulking agents for vocal cord insufficiency for uses other than those listed in the clinical indications for procedure section.

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### Clinical Indications for Procedure

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- Bulking Agents for Vocal Cord Insufficiency are considered medically necessary for individuals with **1 or more** of the following:
  - Vocal cord insufficiency
  - Glottis insufficiency resulting from **1 or more** of the following:
    - Unilateral vocal cord paralysis (UVCP)
    - Vocal fold paralysis
    - Vocal fold paresis
    - Vocal fold atrophy
    - Vocal fold scar

- Vocal fold sulcus vocalis
- Vocal fold bowing
- Presbylaryngis
- Abductor muscle spasmodic dysphonia
- Parkinson's disease

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## Document History

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- Revised Dates:
  - 2022: September
  - 2021: December
  - 2019: November
  - 2016: March
  - 2014: February, July
  - 2013: July
  - 2011: September
- Reviewed Dates:
  - 2020: December
  - 2019: December
  - 2018: June
  - 2016: July
  - 2015: July
  - 2012: August
- Effective Date: January 2011

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## Coding Information

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- CPT/HCPCS codes covered if policy criteria is met:
  - CPT 31513 - Laryngoscopy, indirect; with vocal cord injection
  - CPT 31570 - Laryngoscopy, direct, with injection into vocal cord(s), therapeutic
  - CPT 31571 - Laryngoscopy, direct, with injection into vocal cord(s), therapeutic; with operating microscope or telescope
  - CPT 31574 - Laryngoscopy, flexible; with injection(s) for augmentation (eg, percutaneous, transoral), unilateral
  - HCPCS L8607- Injectable bulking agent for vocal cord medialization, 0.1 ml, includes shipping and necessary supplies
  - HCPCS Q2026 - Injection, Radiesse, 0.1 ml
  - HCPCS Q4112 - Cymetra, injectable, 1 cc
- CPT/HCPCS codes considered not medically necessary per this Policy:
  - NONE

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## References

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### References used include but are not limited to the following:

Specialty Association Guidelines; Government Regulations; Winifred S. Hayes, Inc; Uptodate; Literature Review; Specialty Advisors; National Coverage Determination (NCD); Local Coverage Determination (LCD).

(2022). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from AIM Specialty Health: <https://aimguidelines.wpengine.com/no-search-results-found/>

(2022). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from CMS.gov: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/search-results.aspx?keyword=Vocal+cord&keywordType=starts&areald=all&docType=NCA,CAL,NCD,MEDCAC,TA,MCD,6,3,5,1,F,P&contractOption=all>

21CFR PART 874.3620 Ear, nose, and throat synthetic polymer material. (2022, Mar 29). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from FDA: <https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfcfr/cfrsearch.cfm?fr=874.3620>

Anesthesia for laryngeal surgery. (2022, Mar 22). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from UpToDate: [https://www.uptodate.com/contents/anesthesia-for-laryngeal-surgery?search=injection%20into%20vocal%20cord&source=search\\_result&selectedTitle=2~150&usage\\_type=default&display\\_rank=2#H3748594774](https://www.uptodate.com/contents/anesthesia-for-laryngeal-surgery?search=injection%20into%20vocal%20cord&source=search_result&selectedTitle=2~150&usage_type=default&display_rank=2#H3748594774)

Clinical Practice Guideline: Hoarseness (Dysphonia) (Update). (2018, Mar 1). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAOHN): <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0194599817751030>

Collagen injection for vocal cord augmentation. (2005, Jun 22). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from NICE Guidelines: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ipg130>

Guidance for Industry and FDA Staff: Vocal Fold Medialization Devices - Premarket Notification [510(k)] Submissions. (2004, Feb). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from Food and Drug Administration (FDA): <https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/guidance-industry-and-fda-staff-vocal-fold-medialization-devices-premarket-notification-510k>

Head and Neck Surgery or Procedure GRG (SG-HNS). (2022). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from MCG 26th Edition: <https://careweb.careguidelines.com/ed26/index.html>

Injection Augmentation. (2019, Apr 15). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from American Laryngological Association: [https://alahns.org/wp-content/uploads/CLC/57\\_CLC\\_Injection-Augmentation.pdf](https://alahns.org/wp-content/uploads/CLC/57_CLC_Injection-Augmentation.pdf)

Procedure Fee Files & CPT Codes. (2022). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from Department of Medical Assistance Services: <https://www.dmas.virginia.gov/for-providers/rates-and-rate-setting/procedure-fee-files-cpt-codes/>

Radiesse Voice Injectable Implant (Merz Aesthetics Inc.) For Treatment of Glottic Insufficiency Including Vocal Cord Paralysis - ARCHIVED Jan 3, 2017. (n.d.). Retrieved Aug 29, 2022, from Hayes: <https://evidence.hayesinc.com/report/htb.radiesse1294>

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## Codes

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**CPT® : 31513, 31570, 31571, 31574**  
**HCPCS: L8607, Q2026, Q4112**

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