

Bariatric Services, Surgical 32

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Member-specific benefits take precedence over medical policy and benefits may vary across plans. Refer to the individual's benefit plan for details [*](#).

Purpose:

This policy addresses Bariatric Services.

- Core liver biopsies are covered when performed with bariatric surgery.
- Cholecystectomies are covered when performed with bariatric surgery.

Description & Definitions:

Bariatric surgery is a weight loss surgery that restricts the amount of food the stomach can hold.

Core liver biopsy is a technique used to obtain a small piece of the liver for diagnostic testing.

Cholecystectomy is a surgical procedure to remove the gallbladder.

Criteria:

Bariatric Surgery is considered medically necessary for **ALL of the following**:

- Type of Surgery with **1 or more** of the following are present and will be approved as ambulatory (outpatient) unless additional criteria are met as noted by MCG's Ambulatory Surgery or Procedure criteria located at the bottom of this section:
 - Open or laparoscopic biliopancreatic diversion (BPD) with or without switch
 - Open or laparoscopic Roux-en-Y gastric bypass (RYGB)
 - Laparoscopic adjustable silicone gastric banding (LASGB)
 - Open or laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy
 - open or laparoscopic single anastomosis duodenal-ileal switch (SADI-S)
 - Intragastic Balloons (Orbera®, Reshape®, Obalon®)
 - Repeat bariatric surgery (individuals do not have to repeat the initial qualifying criteria) is considered medically necessary with **1 or more** of the following:
 - Conversion to a Roux-en-Y gastric bypass (RYGB) or biliopancreatic diversion/ duodenal switch (BPD/DS) is considered continued therapy with **All of the** following:
 - Individual has Morbid Obesity Rider

- Individual has not had adequate success following the primary bariatric surgery as defined by **All of the** following:
 - Time frame of no less than 2 years
 - Loss of more than 50% of excess body weight
 - Individual has been compliant with the prescribed nutrition and exercise program
 - Conversion to a Roux-en-Y gastric bypass (RYGB) status post sleeve gastrectomy for individuals with gastroesophageal reflux disease who are refractory to medical therapy.
 - Individual has Morbid Obesity Rider
 - Surgical revision to address a complication when there is documentation of an ongoing problem related to the original surgery with **all of the** following:
 - Individual has Morbid Obesity Rider
 - Gastric band replacement or repositioning is covered for **all of the** following:
 - Individual has Morbid Obesity Rider
 - Gastric band adjustments or removal are considered medically necessary for **1 or more of the** following:
 - Individual with or without Morbid Obesity Rider with indications of **1 or more** of the following:
 - Individual with band intolerance
 - Individual with band leakage
 - Individual with band slippage
 - Individual with band erosion
 - Individual with thrombus development
 - Individual with pouch dilation
 - Individual with stomal obstruction
 - Individual with port infection
 - Individual with port malfunction
 - Individual with esophagitis if intractable to medical therapy
 - Individual with esophageal dilatation
 - Individual with hiatus hernia
 - Individual with fistula formation
 - Individual with other complication
- Age of individual with 1 or more of the following are present and will be approved as ambulatory (outpatient) unless additional criteria are met as noted by MCG's Ambulatory Surgery or Procedure criteria located at the bottom of this section:
 - Bariatric surgery for adolescents is considered medically necessary with **All of the following**:
 - Individuals who have completed bone growth (generally age 13 in girls and 15 in boys)
 - Individuals with a body mass index (BMI) of **1 of the** following:
 - Body mass index (BMI) exceeding 40 and a severe comorbidity with **1 or more** of the following:
 - Clinically significant obstructive sleep apnea
 - Type 2 diabetes mellitus
 - Pseudotumor comorbidities
 - Body mass index (BMI) exceeding 50 and a less serious comorbidity with **1 or more** of the following:
 - Obesity related psychosocial distress
 - Hypertension
 - Dyslipidemia
 - Nonalcoholic steatohepatitis
 - Venous stasis disease
 - Significant impairment in activities of daily living
 - Intertriginous soft-tissue infections
 - Stress urinary incontinence
 - Gastroesophageal reflux disease
 - Weigh related arthropathies that impair physical activity

- Individual with documentation of compliance with and failure of a medically supervised weight loss program as evidenced by **1 or more** of the following:
 - Individuals with a Fully Insured Commercial Plan coverage must meet **All of the** following:
 - Individual participated in a physician supervised nutrition and exercise program for weight loss
 - Individual has participated for 6 months
 - Individual's progress is documented at least monthly throughout the course of the nutrition and exercise program
 - Individual's program must be within a 12 month period prior to the bariatric surgery request
 - Individual's bariatric surgeon must be part of the multidisciplinary surgery preparatory program for at least 3 consecutive months before the request
 - Individuals with a Self- Funded Commercial Plan must meet **All of the** following:
 - Individual's nutrition and exercise program for weight loss may be administered at least monthly by **1 or more** of the following:
 - Certified diabetes educator (CDE)
 - Registered dietitian (RD)
 - Registered Nurse (RN) under the supervision of a physician at least monthly
 - Individual's specific benefit plan's requirements must be met
- Bariatric surgery for adults with **ALL** of the following:
 - Individual with severe obesity that has persisted for at least the last 2 years defined by **1 or more** of the following:
 - Body mass index (BMI) exceeding 40
 - Individual with a body mass index (BMI) greater or equal to 35 in conjunction with **1 or more of the** following:
 - Coronary artery disease
 - Cerebral vascular disease
 - Type 2 diabetes mellitus
 - Clinically significant obstructive sleep apnea
 - Hypertension (blood pressure greater than 140 mmHg systolic and/or 90 mmHg diastolic)
- Individual has completed growth (>18 years of age)
- Individual with documentation of compliance with and failure of a medically supervised weight loss program as evidenced by **1 or more** of the following:
 - Individuals with a Fully Insured Commercial Plan coverage must meet **All of the** following:
 - Individual participated in a physician supervised nutrition and exercise program for weight loss
 - Individual has participated for 6 months
 - Individual's progress is documented at least monthly throughout the course of the nutrition and exercise program
 - Individual's program must be within a 12 month period prior to the bariatric surgery request
 - Individual's bariatric surgeon must be part of the multidisciplinary surgery preparatory program for at least 3 consecutive months before the request
 - Individuals with a Self- Funded Commercial Plan must meet **All of the** following:
 - Individual's nutrition and exercise program for weight loss may be administered at least monthly by **1 or more** of the following:
 - Certified diabetes educator (CDE)
 - Registered dietitian (RD)
 - Registered Nurse (RN) under the supervision of a physician at least monthly

- Individual's specific benefit plan's requirements must be met

As noted in MCG's Ambulatory Surgery or Procedure GRG PG-AS (ISC GRG):

This surgery or procedure will be traditionally approved ambulatory (outpatient), but may receive initial approval for Inpatient Care when **one or more of the following** are met:

- Inpatient care needed for clinically significant disease or condition identified preoperatively, as indicated by **one or more of the following**:
 - Severe infection
 - Altered mental status
 - Dangerous arrhythmia
 - Hypotension
 - Hypoxemia
- Complex surgical approach or situation anticipated, as indicated by **1 or more** of the following:
 - Prolonged airway monitoring required (eg, severe obstructive sleep apnea, open neck procedure)
 - Other aspect or feature of procedure that indicates a likely need for prolonged postoperative care or monitoring
- High patient risk identified preoperatively, as indicated by **1 or more** of the following:
 - American Society of Anesthesiologists class IV or greater American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) Physical Status Classification System
 - Severe frailty
 - Severe valvular disease (eg, severe aortic stenosis)
 - Symptomatic coronary artery disease, or heart failure
 - Symptomatic chronic lung disease (eg, COPD, chronic lung disease of prematurity)
 - Severe renal disease (eg, glomerular filtration rate (GFR) less than 30 mL/min/1.73m² (0.5 mL/sec/1.73m²) or on dialysis) eGFR - Adult Calculator
 - Morbid obesity (eg, body mass index greater than 40 BMI Calculator) with hemodynamic or respiratory problems (eg, severe obstructive sleep apnea, hypoventilation)
 - Complex chronic condition in children (eg, ventilator-dependent, neuromuscular, genetic, or immunologic disease)
 - Other patient condition or finding that places patient at increased anesthetic risk such that prolonged postoperative inpatient monitoring or treatment is anticipated
- Presence of drug-related risk identified preoperatively, as indicated by **1 or more** of the following:
 - Procedure requires discontinuing medication (eg, antiarrhythmic medication, antiseizure or anticoagulant medication), which necessitates preoperative or prolonged postoperative inpatient monitoring or treatment.
 - Preoperative use of drugs that may interact with anesthetic (eg, cocaine, amphetamines, monoamine oxidase inhibitor) such that prolonged postoperative monitoring or treatment is needed

Bariatric surgery is NOT COVERED for ANY of the following:

- Band adjustments or removal within 90 days of surgery are considered included in the global surgical fee and not separately allowable.
- Band adjustments after the 90 day period are excluded from coverage unless the member has the Morbid Obesity rider.
- Physical therapy for obesity is considered not medically necessary upon technology review as it is unproven to improve health outcomes.

- Stretching of a stomach pouch formed by a previous bypass/restrictive surgery, due to overeating, does not constitute a surgical complication and the revision of this condition is considered not medically necessary.
- Endoluminal fastener and delivery system
- Gastrointestinal liners (e.g., EndoBarrier)
- Gastroplasty (e.g., stomach stapling)
- Intestinal bypass (e.g., jejunioileal bypass)
- Laparoscopic greater curvature plication (e.g., total gastric vertical plication)
- Loop gastric bypass
- Lower greater curvature plication for the treatment of obesity
- Mini gastric bypass
- Roux-en-Y gastric bypass combined with simultaneous gastric banding biliopancreatic diversion (BPD) without duodenal switch (DS)
- Silastic ring vertical gastric bypass (e.g., Fobi pouch)
- Small intestine reconstruction to limit absorption
- Transoral endoscopic bariatric surgery (e.g., transoral gastroplasty (TOGA), StomaphyX, restorative obesity surgery, endoluminal (ROSE) procedure, etc.)
- Vagus nerve blocking (VNB) or vagal blocking therapy for the treatment of obesity

Coding:

Medically necessary with criteria:

Coding	Description
43633	Gastrectomy, partial, distal; with Roux-en-Y Reconstruction
43644	Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure; with gastric bypass and Roux-en-Y gastroenterostomy (roux limb 150 cm or less)
43645	Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure; with gastric bypass and small intestine reconstruction to limit absorption
43659	Unlisted laparoscopy procedure, stomach
43770	Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure; placement of adjustable gastric restrictive device (eg, gastric band and subcutaneous port components)
43771	Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure; revision of adjustable gastric restrictive device component only
43772	Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure; removal of adjustable gastric restrictive device component only
43773	Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure; removal and replacement of adjustable gastric restrictive device component only
43774	Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure; removal of adjustable gastric restrictive device and subcutaneous port components

43775	Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure; longitudinal gastrectomy (ie, sleeve gastrectomy)
43842	Gastric restrictive procedure, without gastric bypass, for morbid obesity; vertical-banded gastroplasty
43843	Gastric restrictive procedure, without gastric bypass, for morbid obesity; other than vertical-banded gastroplasty
43845	Gastric restrictive procedure with partial gastrectomy, pylorus-preserving duodenoileostomy and ileoileostomy (50 to 100 cm common channel) to limit absorption (biliopancreatic diversion with duodenal switch)
43846	Gastric restrictive procedure, with gastric bypass for morbid obesity; with short limb (150 cm or less) Roux-en-Y gastroenterostomy
43847	Gastric restrictive procedure, with gastric bypass for morbid obesity; with small intestine reconstruction to limit absorption
43848	Revision, open, of gastric restrictive procedure for morbid obesity, other than adjustable gastric restrictive device (separate procedure)
43886	Gastric restrictive procedure, open; revision of subcutaneous port component only
43887	Gastric restrictive procedure, open; removal of subcutaneous port component only
43888	Gastric restrictive procedure, open; removal and replacement of subcutaneous port component only
43999	Unlisted procedure, stomach
47000	Biopsy of liver, needle; percutaneous
47001	Biopsy of liver, needle; when done for indicated purpose at time of other major procedure (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
S2083	Adjustment of gastric band diameter via subcutaneous port by injection or aspiration of saline

Considered Not Medically Necessary:

Coding	Description
64999	Unlisted procedure, nervous system
0312T	Vagus nerve blocking therapy (morbid obesity); laparoscopic implantation of neurostimulator electrode array, anterior and posterior vagal trunks adjacent to esophagogastric junction (EGJ), with implantation of pulse generator, includes programming
0313T	Vagus nerve blocking therapy (morbid obesity); laparoscopic revision or replacement of vagal trunk neurostimulator electrode array, including connection to existing pulse generator
0314T	Vagus nerve blocking therapy (morbid obesity); laparoscopic removal of vagal trunk neurostimulator electrode array and pulse generator
0315T	Vagus nerve blocking therapy (morbid obesity); removal of pulse generator
0316T	Vagus nerve blocking therapy (morbid obesity); replacement of pulse generator
0317T	Vagus nerve blocking therapy (morbid obesity); neurostimulator pulse generator electronic analysis, includes reprogramming when performed

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) - approved only products only.

Document History:

Revised Dates:

- 2024: August
- 2021: January, March, August
- 2019: November
- 2016: April
- 2015: June
- 2014: April, June, July, August
- 2013: January, April, June
- 2012: March, June, July, September, December
- 2011: October
- 2010: November
- 2009: August
- 2008: October
- 2005: September
- 2004: July
- 2003: April, September
- 2001: September
- 2000: July
- 1999: March, September
- 1996: August

Reviewed Dates:

- 2023: March
- 2022: March
- 2020: April
- 2018: November
- 2017: November
- 2016: January
- 2011: September
- 2010: April, October
- 2007: December
- 2005: December
- 2004: February, August, September
- 2002: September
- 1998: October
- 1995: May

Effective Date:

- January 1993

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Special Notes: *

Medical policies can be highly technical and complex and are provided here for informational purposes. These medical policies are intended for use by health care professionals. The medical policies do not constitute medical advice or medical care. Treating health care professionals are solely responsible for diagnosis, treatment, and medical advice. Sentara Health Plan members should discuss the information in the medical policies with their treating health care professionals. Medical technology is constantly evolving, and these medical policies are subject to change without notice, although Sentara Health Plan will notify providers as required in advance of changes that could have a negative impact on benefits.

Services mean both medical and behavioral health (mental health) services and supplies unless We specifically tell You otherwise. We do not cover any services that are not listed in the Covered Services section unless required to be covered under state or federal laws and regulations. We do not cover any services that are not Medically Necessary. We sometimes give examples of specific services that are not covered but that does not mean that other similar services are covered. Some services are covered only if We authorize them. When We say You or Your We mean You and any of Your family members covered under the Plan. Call Member Services if You have questions.

Keywords:

Morbid obesity, gastrectomy, lap band, gastric restrictive procedure, bariatric services, bariatric surgery, roux-en-Y gastric bypass, RYGB, biliopancreatic diversion, BPD, duodenal switch, laparoscopic adjustable silicone gastric banding, LASGB, sleeve gastrectomy, shp surgical 32, Endoluminal fastener and delivery system, Gastrointestinal liners, EndoBarrier, Gastroplasty, stomach stapling, Intestinal bypass, jejunioileal bypass, Intragastric balloon, Laparoscopic greater curvature plication, total gastric vertical plication, Loop gastric bypass, Lower greater curvature plication, Mini gastric bypass, gastric banding , Silastic ring vertical gastric bypass, Fobi pouch, Small intestine reconstruction to limit absorption, Transoral endoscopic bariatric surgery, transoral gastroplasty, TOGA, StomaphyX, restorative obesity surgery, endoluminal, Vagus nerve blocking, vagal blocking therapy, Vertical banded gastroplasty