ENHANCED EXTERNAL COUNTERPULSATION (EECP)

Coverage for services, procedures, medical devices and drugs are dependent upon benefit eligibility as outlined in the member’s specific benefit plan. This Medical Coverage Guideline must be read in its entirety to determine coverage eligibility, if any.

This Medical Coverage Guideline provides information related to coverage determinations only and does not imply that a service or treatment is clinically appropriate or inappropriate. The provider and the member are responsible for all decisions regarding the appropriateness of care. Providers should provide BCBSAZ complete medical rationale when requesting any exceptions to these guidelines.

The section identified as “Description” defines or describes a service, procedure, medical device or drug and is in no way intended as a statement of medical necessity and/or coverage.

The section identified as “Criteria” defines criteria to determine whether a service, procedure, medical device or drug is considered medically necessary or experimental or investigational.

State or federal mandates, e.g., FEP program, may dictate that any drug, device or biological product approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) may not be considered experimental or investigational and thus the drug, device or biological product may be assessed only on the basis of medical necessity.

Medical Coverage Guidelines are subject to change as new information becomes available.

For purposes of this Medical Coverage Guideline, the terms "experimental" and "investigational" are considered to be interchangeable.

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Description:

External counterpulsation, commonly referred to as enhanced external counterpulsation (EECP), is a noninvasive, outpatient treatment for coronary artery disease refractory to medical or surgical therapy. During the rhythmic expansion of the blood vessels and chambers of the heart, at which time the vessels and heart will fill with blood, three sets of air cuffs are inflated sequentially, compressing the vascular beds within the muscles of the calves, lower and upper thighs. This action results in an increase in diastolic pressure, retrograde arterial blood flow, and an increase in venous return. This appears to improve myocardial perfusion while reducing the cardiac workload, allowing increased exercise tolerance and a reduction in the number and severity of anginal episodes.
ENHANCED EXTERNAL COUNTERPULSATION (EECP) (cont.)

Criteria:

- One course of EECP therapy is considered **medically necessary** for **stable** angina pectoris with documentation of **ALL** of the following:
  
  1. Disabling angina
  2. Individual is not a surgical (PTCA, cardiac bypass) candidate per the opinion of the cardiologist or cardiothoracic surgeon as the result of:
     - Condition is inoperable or individual is at high risk of operative complications or post-operative failure, or
     - Coronary anatomy is not readily amenable to such procedures, or
     - Co-morbid condition(s) create excessive risk.

- EECP treatment for all other indications is considered **experimental or investigational** based upon:
  
  1. Insufficient evidence to support improvement of the net health outcome, and
  2. Insufficient scientific evidence to permit conclusions concerning the effect on health outcomes.

These indications include, **but are not limited to:**

- Congestive heart failure
- Erectile dysfunction
- Ischemic stroke

1 Up to 36 one-hour treatments offered once or twice daily is considered to be a single course of therapy.

2 Class III or Class IV, Canadian Cardiovascular Society Classification or equivalent classification.
ENHANCED EXTERNAL COUNTERPULSATION (EECP) (cont.)

Resources:

Literature reviewed 09/13/16. We do not include marketing materials, poster boards and non-published literature in our review.

The BCBS Association Medical Policy Reference Manual (MPRM) policy is included in our guideline review. References cited in the MPRM policy are not duplicated on this guideline.


3. BCBS Association Technology Assessment Program. External Counterpulsation for Treatment of Chronic Stable Angina Pectoris. October 2002;17(15)


