

Utilization Management Criteria for Medical Necessity Cosmetic vs. Reconstructive Surgery: Panniculectomy

Cosmetic surgery is performed to reshape *normal* structures of the body in order to improve the patient's appearance and self esteem¹. **Cosmetic surgery is not a UPHP benefit.**

Reconstructive surgery is performed on *abnormal* structures of the body. It is generally performed to improve function but may also be done to approximate a normal appearance¹. **Reconstructive surgery may or may not be a UPHP benefit depending on the medical necessity and requires prior authorization for coverage.**

Panniculectomy is the surgical removal of the massive "apron" of redundant skin and fat in the lower abdominal area. It may be reconstructive or cosmetic.

Reconstructive Panniculectomy is medically necessary when done to relieve specific clinical signs and symptoms of panniculitis.

Authorization Specifics:

- Prior authorization requests must include documentation to show the medical necessity criteria are met.
- Documentation must include medical records of prior treatments for the condition(s) identified.
- Preoperative photos; abdomen exposed, frontal and lateral, must accompany a prior authorization request. These may be provided by the member or requesting provider. Polaroids are acceptable.

Criteria:

- 1) The panniculus hangs to or below the level of pubis, and one of a. or b. below:
 - a) Uncontrollable intertrigo refractory to medical therapy for a period of at least six (6) months. Evidence of this may include cellulitis, ulceration, lymphedema, and skin abscesses.
 - b) Pannus interferes with activities of daily living.
- 2) Minimum of one year post bariatric surgery, if applicable.²

Bibliography

¹ American Society of Plastic Surgeons: *ASPS Recommended Insurance Coverage Criteria for Third-Party Payers; Surgical Treatment of Skin Redundancy for Obese and Massive Weight Loss Patients*, Website www.plasticsurgery.org. Approved by ASPS[®] Executive Committee: July 2006, Coding Updated January 2007

American Society of Plastic Surgeons: *Practice Parameter for Surgical Treatment of Skin Redundancy for Obese and Massive Weight Loss Patients*, Website www.plasticsurgery.org. Approved by ASPS[®] Executive Committee: July 2006, Coding Updated January 2007

² American Society of Plastic Surgeons: Plastic Surgery 2003: Press Release: October 28, 2003: *ASPS Study Proves Body Contouring One Year After Bariatric Surgery Safe – Significantly Reduces Complication*, Web site www.plasticsurgery.org.

MDCH – Medicaid Provider Manual; Updated April 1-2008; Practitioner; Section 13.2 Cosmetic Surgery, page 64

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