

**Upper Peninsula Health Plan
Utilization Management Criteria for Medical Necessity
Cosmetic vs. Reconstructive Surgery: Panniculectomy**

Applicable to the following product lines: Upper Peninsula Health Plan (UPHP) Medicaid, MI Child, Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS), Healthy Michigan Plan (HMP)

Panniculectomy is a procedure designed to remove fatty tissue and excess skin (panniculus) from the lower to middle portions of the abdomen.

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.

Criteria:

1. The panniculus hangs to or below the level of pubis in standing position, and
2. Medical records must include documentation of ulceration(s), intertrigo, or infections (bacterial or fungal) that are unresponsive to conservative medical therapy (e.g., topical antifungals, corticosteroids, antibiotics) for a minimum of three months. Response to interventions must also be included to substantiate the condition being refractory to non-invasive therapies, and
3. Minimum of one year post bariatric surgery, if applicable, and
4. Weight must be stable for the most recent six months after weight loss, and
5. Abstinence from nicotine and tobacco for six weeks before surgery. Abstinence from inhaled marijuana is strongly recommended (see below). *
6. Elective panniculectomy should not be performed during pregnancy. Postpartum patients should wait at least six weeks after delivery before undergoing surgery.
7. Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis with medical review, particularly for patients with severe functional impairment (e.g., extremely large pannus or associated lipomas significantly limiting ambulation or activities of daily living), even if standard criteria are not fully met.

** Patient must abstain from all forms of nicotine and tobacco use—including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, and nicotine-containing vaping products—for at least six weeks prior to surgery. Patients should also abstain from smoking or vaping marijuana for at least six weeks prior to surgery, due to potential respiratory and wound healing complications. Ingestion of marijuana (edibles) does not carry the same risks.*

Bibliography

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