



## NHS MEDICAL POLICY

### Ultrasound guidance for joint aspiration or injection Procedure 2014-016

Ultrasound guidance for joint aspiration or injection may be indicated when any ONE of the following is present:

1	A SMALL or INTERMEDIATE joint or bursa is to be aspirated or injected. <i>(Examples of small or intermediate joints are: fingers, toes, temporomandibular, acromioclavicular, wrist, elbow, ankle and olecranon bursa.)</i>
2	A MAJOR joint or bursa is to be aspirated or injected and ONE of the following is documented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal joint architecture is deranged due to trauma, prior surgery, rheumatoid arthritis, gout or the presence of hardware.</li> <li>• The joint is not palpable due to edema, obesity, contracture or stiffness that prevents positioning.</li> <li>• The initial attempt without ultrasound guidance failed.</li> </ul> <i>(Examples of major joints are: shoulder, hip, knee and sub-acromial bursa.)</i>
3	A Baker's cyst (popliteal synovial cyst) is to be aspirated.

### SOURCES

1. [www.UpToDate.com](http://www.UpToDate.com) was accessed Oct 26, 2015: Musculoskeletal ultrasonography: Guided injection and aspiration of joints and related structures.
2. Cunnington J, Marshall N, Hide G, Bracewell C, Isaacs J, Platt, P, Kane D. A randomized, double-blind, controlled study of ultrasound-guided corticosteroid injection into the joint of patients with inflammatory arthritis. *Arthritis & Rheumatism* 2010; 62(7): 1862-69.
3. Gilliland C., Salazar L., Borchers J. Ultrasound versus anatomic guidance for intra-articular and periarticular injection: a systemic review. *Phys Sportsmed* 2011 Sep; 39(3): 121-31.
4. Hall S., Buchbinder R. Do imaging methods that guide needle placement improve outcome. *Annals of Rheum. Disease* 2004; 63: 1007-08.

5. Sibbitt WL, Band PA, Chavez-Chiang NL, Delea SL, Norton HE, Bankhurst AD. A randomized controlled trial of the cost-effectiveness of ultrasound-guided intraarticular injection of inflammatory arthritis. J Rheumatology 2011; 38(2): 252-63.
6. Sibbitt W, Peisajovich A, Michael A, Park K, Sibbitt R, Band P, Bankhurst A. Does sonographic needle guidance affect the clinical outcome of intraarticular injections? J Rheumatol 2009; 36(9): 1892–902.
7. Daley EL, et al, Improving injection accuracy of the elbow, knee, and shoulder: does injection site and imaging make a difference? A systematic review. Am J Sports Med. 2011 Mar;39(3):656-62.
8. Berkoff DJ, et al, Clinical utility of ultrasound guidance for intra-articular knee injections: a review. Clin Interv Aging. 2012;7:89-95.

**CODE REFERENCE** (This may not be a comprehensive list of codes to apply to this policy.)

Arthrocentesis, aspiration and /or injection Codes, Updated 2015

<b>CPT</b>	<b>Joints or bursa involved</b>	<b>Ultrasound guidance</b>
<b>20600</b>	SMALL (examples: fingers, toes)	Not used
<b>20604</b>	SMALL (examples: fingers, toes)	Yes, included in this code
<b>20605</b>	INTERMEDIATE (examples: temporomandibular, acromioclavicular, wrist, elbow, ankle, olecranon bursa)	Not used
<b>20606</b>	INTERMEDIATE (examples: temporomandibular, acromioclavicular, wrist, elbow, ankle, olecranon bursa)	Yes, included in this code
<b>20610</b>	MAJOR (examples: shoulder, hip, knee, subacromial bursa)	Not used
<b>20611</b>	MAJOR (examples: shoulder, hip, knee, subacromial bursa)	Yes, included in this code

(CPT 76942, Ultrasonic guidance for needle placement, imaging supervision and interpretation, is no longer reported with any joint injection codes.)

**POLICY HISTORY/REVISION INFORMATION**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action/Description</b>
09/25/2015	Annual review and approval by UM Committee
12/16/2015	Annual review and approval by UM Committee
12/14/2016	Annual review and approval by UM Committee
12/13/2017	Annual review and approval by UM Committee
12/13/2018	Annual review and approval by UM Committee
12/12/2019	Annual review and approval by UM Committee
12/10/2020	Annual review and approval by UM Committee
12/10/2021	Annual review and approval by UM Committee
12/21/2022	Annual review and approval by UM Committee
12/20/2023	Annual review and approval by UM/QM Committee