Effective Date: 12/18/2014

Nevada Health Solutions LLC

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. *(Examples of small or intermediate joints are: fingers, toes, temporomandibular, acromioclavicular, wrist, elbow, ankle and olecranon bursa.)*
2	A MAJOR joint or bursa is to be aspirated or injected and ONE of the following is documented: • Normal joint architecture is deranged due to trauma, prior surgery, rheumatoid arthritis, gout or the presence of hardware. • The joint is not palpable due to edema, obesity, contracture or stiffness that prevents positioning. • The initial attempt without ultrasound guidance failed. *(Examples of major joints are: shoulder, hip, knee and sub-acromial bursa.)*
3	A Baker's cyst (popliteal synovial cyst) is to be aspirated.

SOURCES

1. 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.

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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

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

Date	Action/Description
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
12/23/2024	Annual review and approval by UM/QM Committee
09/30/2025	Annual review and approval by UM/QM Committee
09/29/2026	Annual review and approval by UM/QM Committee

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