

## Medical Policy



An Independent Licensee of the  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

### **Title: Acne Surgery**

#### **Professional**

Original Effective Date: January 1, 2001

Revision Date(s): January 30, 2006

Current Effective Date: April 1, 2006

#### **DESCRIPTION**

The physician makes a small incision through the skin overlying a lesion, or multiple lesions, such as comedones, cysts, or pustules for acne surgery. The skin over the lesion is removed. The lesion is opened with a surgical instrument and the fluid is drained for secondary healing. The lesion may be removed or marsupialized by exteriorizing the cyst and making a pouch where it used to be enclosed. No sutures are needed.

#### **POLICY**

Acne surgery such as marsupialization, opening, expression, or removal of multiple milia, comedones, cysts, and pustules is medically necessary for the treatment of active acne vulgaris.

Cryotherapy for active acne vulgaris is considered medically necessary.

#### **DOCUMENTATION**

The medical record should include:

1. Description of the lesions(s), number of open and closed comedones, location on the body
2. How patient was prepared for the procedure (alcohol, Betadine, saline preparations, etc)
3. The instrument used for extraction/marsupialization (comedone extractor, 15 blade, curette, etc.)
4. The control of hemostasis, if applicable
5. How the patient tolerated the procedure and
6. Current acne treatment

#### **UTILIZATION**

Acne surgery may be performed five times per year per patient without review. Acne surgery performed greater than five times in a year on a patient; the medical record must be submitted to review for medical necessity.

**CODING****CPT**

- 10040 Acne surgery (e.g. marsupialization, opening or removal of multiple milia, comedones, cysts, pustules)
- 10060 Incision and drainage of abscess (e.g. carbuncle, suppurative hidradenitis, cutaneous or subcutaneous abscess, cyst, furuncle, or paronychia); simple or single
- 10061 Incision and drainage of abscess (e.g. carbuncle, suppurative hidradenitis, cutaneous or subcutaneous abscess, cyst, furuncle, or paronychia); complicated or multiple
- 17340 Cryotherapy (CO<sub>2</sub> slush, liquid N<sub>2</sub>) for acne

**DIAGNOSIS**

**These diagnoses are otherwise subject to medical policy as stated above**

- 680.0 Carbuncle and furuncle of face
- 706.0 Acne varioliformis
- 706.1 Other acne

**REFERENCES**

1. Frank SB. An update on acne vulgaris. *Int J Dermatol.* 1977; 16 (5): 409-412.
2. Landow K. Dispelling myths about acne. *Postgrad Med.* 1997; 102 (2): 94-104.
3. Kaminsky A. Less common methods to treat acne. *Dermatology.* 2003; 206:68-73.
4. Kaya TI, Tursen U, Kokturk A, Ikizoglu G. An effective extraction technique for the treatment of closed macrocomedones. *Dermatol Surg.* 2003; 29(7): 741-744.
5. Shalita AR. Surgical procedures for the treatment of acne vulgaris. *J Dermatol Surg.* 1975; 1(3): 46-48.

**Government Agency; Medical Society; and Other Authoritative Publications**

1. American Academy of Dermatology. Guidelines of care for acne vulgaris. *J AM Acad Dermatol.* 1990 April; 22(4): 676-80.
2. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Medical Consultant, Practicing Board Certified Dermatologist (KS 436), December 9, 2005.
3. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Medical Consultant, Practicing Board Certified Dermatologist (MCMC), December 20, 2005.