

Medical Coverage Policy | Nutrient/Nutritional Panel Testing



EFFECTIVE DATE: 05|01|2023

POLICY LAST UPDATED: 04|28|2023

OVERVIEW

This policy is for nutritional panel testing when used to identify nutritional deficiencies that will lead to personalized nutritional supplement recommendations. Testing is proposed both for healthy individuals to optimize health and for patients with chronic conditions (eg, mood disorders, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue) to specify supplements that will ameliorate symptoms.

MEDICAL CRITERIA

Not applicable

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

Not applicable

POLICY STATEMENT

Medicare Advantage Plans and Commercial Products

Nutrient/nutritional panel testing is considered not covered for Medicare Advantage Plans and not medically necessary for Commercial Products for all indications including but not limited to testing for nutritional deficiencies in patients with mood disorders, fibromyalgia, unexplained fatigue, and healthy individuals.

COVERAGE

Medicare Advantage Plans and Commercial Products

Benefits may vary between groups/contracts. Please refer to the Evidence of Coverage or Subscriber Agreement for applicable not medically necessary/not covered benefits/coverage.

BACKGROUND

Nutritional panel testing aims to identify nutritional deficiencies that will lead to personalized nutritional supplement recommendations. Testing is proposed both for healthy individuals to optimize health and for patients with chronic conditions (eg, mood disorders, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue) to specify supplements that will ameliorate symptoms.

Genova Diagnostics offers nutritional/nutrient panel testing. Among the tests this company offers is NutrEval FMV, which involves analysis of urine and blood samples and provides information on more than 100 markers including organic acids, amino acids, fatty acids, markers of oxidative stress (direct measurement of glutathione and CoQ10, and markers of oxidative injury and DNA damage) and nutrient elements.

Genova Diagnostics produces a report that includes test results categorized as normal, borderline, and high need, along with recommendations for supplements and dosages for items categorized as high need. NutrEval FMV patient reports can recommend supplementation or any of the nutrients if they are found to be areas of high need.

SpectraCell Laboratories offers a micronutrient test that measures functional deficiencies at the cellular level. The test assesses how well the body uses 31 vitamins, minerals, amino and fatty acids, antioxidants, and metabolites. SpectraCell categorizes test results into adequate, borderline, and deficient, and offers supplementation suggestions based on each patient's deficiencies.

Direct evidence of clinical utility is provided by studies that have compared health outcomes for patients managed with and without the test. Because these are intervention studies, the preferred evidence would be from randomized controlled trials (RCTs).

No RCTs were identified that assessed the clinical utility of nutrient/nutritional panel testing for mood disorders, fibromyalgia, unexplained fatigue, or optimization of health and fitness.

Several systematic reviews and meta-analyses evaluating associations between the indications of interest and specific nutrient deficiencies were identified. No systematic reviews or meta-analyses were identified in the association between nutritional deficiencies and unexplained fatigue. A limitation of all reviews is that, although they compared low and high levels of nutrient levels, none addressed whether these low levels constituted actual deficiencies in a particular nutrient.

For individuals who have mood disorders, fibromyalgia, or unexplained fatigue, or healthy individuals who seek to optimize health and fitness who receive nutritional panel testing, the evidence includes several systematic reviews and RCTs on the association between a single condition and a single nutrient and on the treatment of specific conditions with nutritional supplements. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, change in disease status, and functional outcomes. There was no evidence of associations between fibromyalgia or unexplained fatigue and nutrient deficiencies. Systematic reviews have found statistically significant associations between depression or fibromyalgia and levels of several nutrients; however, there is little evidence that nutrient supplementation for patients with depression improves health outcomes. An RCT has also found statistically significant associations between fatigue and levels of vitamin D. However, there is no direct evidence on the health benefits of nutritional panel testing for any condition, including testing healthy individuals, and no evidence that nutritional panel testing is superior to testing for individual nutrients for any condition. The evidence is insufficient to determine that the technology results in an improvement in the net health outcomes.

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CODING

There is not a specific CPT code for this panel testing. Therefore, claims should be filed with one of the following Unlisted CPT codes, below.

While there may be specific CPT codes for some of the components* of the panel testing, claims for the entire panel **MUST** be filed only with one of the Unlisted CPT codes noted below.

- 81479** Unlisted molecular pathology procedure
- 84999** Unlisted chemistry procedure

*Examples of components of Nutrient/Nutrition panels may include the following codes. This is not an all-inclusive list:

- 82746** Folic acid; serum
- 83735** Magnesium
- 83785** Manganese
- 84590** Vitamin A
- 84630** Zinc
- 82128** Amino acids; multiple, qualitative, each specimen
- 82136** Amino acids, 2 to 5 amino acids, quantitative, each specimen

RELATED POLICIES

Not applicable

PUBLISHED

Provider Update, March 2023

Provider Update, February 2022

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3. SpectraCell Laboratories Micronutrient Test Panel. <https://www.spectracell.com/micronutrient-test-panel>. Accessed October 21, 2022.
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