



**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 04|01|2011

**POLICY LAST REVIEWED:** 08|07|2024

### OVERVIEW

BCBSRI has created a policy to document the reimbursement of prepackaged (i.e., sterile) medical supplies/devices intended for individual use that have been opened but unused due to an unforeseen problem.

### MEDICAL CRITERIA

Not applicable.

### PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

Not applicable.

### POLICY STATEMENT

#### Medicare Advantage Plans and Commercial Products

Charges for opened and unused medical supplies will not be reimbursed. The member is not held liable for these charges. Providers may not bill BCBSRI for a medical supply or device when the item has not been in contact with the patient or the item was opened, contaminated, or the wrong size, but was not used.

For example, an intrauterine device (I.U.D) package was opened prior to the attempted insertion of which was unsuccessful due to insufficient dilation of the cervix. "Open but unused" is defined as devices whose sterility has been breached or compromised or whose sterile package was opened, but the devices have not come in contact with blood or bodily fluids.

Providers may bill for items that been inserted and removed or insertion of a device was attempted but unsuccessful during a procedure.

### COVERAGE

Not applicable.

### BACKGROUND

In the United States, implanted items or supplies made ready for a particular patient but not actually used during the particular procedure are often discarded. This is because these items are deemed contaminated even if there has been no contact at all with the patient. It is the responsibility of the physician or other qualified health professional that the item remains unopened until it has been confirmed the item may be used.

### CODING

Open and unused items shall be appended with the 53 modifier.

### RELATED POLICIES

Not applicable.

### PUBLISHED

Provider Update, October 2024

Provider Update, January 2022

Provider Update, April 2018

Provider Update, February 2013  
Provider Update, September 2012

## REFERENCES

Not applicable.

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