Injectable Bulking Agent for Fecal Incontinence

Prospective review is not required.

Description:
Fecal incontinence is defined as the unintentional loss of flatus, liquid, or stool. Although it is considered a benign disorder, severe fecal incontinence is a distressing and socially isolating medical condition. The loss of control of one's bowels reduces the quality of life and psychological well being. Individuals who suffer from this condition often alter their lifestyle to minimize the likelihood of bowel accidents in public places. Over time, this can result in progressive social isolation and work incapacity.

Fecal incontinence can occur at any age, but is most common among people over the age of 65. Vaginal delivery childbirth is a major cause of fecal incontinence as childbirth may result in damage to the anal sphincter.

Several treatments have reported good results. If an underlying condition is causing fecal incontinence, treating the condition may bring relief. If there is no underlying condition, or if treating the underlying condition does not work, suppositories or enemas may help. Sphincter damage caused by childbirth is often effectively treated with surgery, as are other kinds of incontinence related sphincter injuries. Sometimes surgical treatment requires building an artificial sphincter using a thigh muscle. Biofeedback training has also been investigated.

Studies using injectable bulking agents have been run with limited results. At this time studies are limited and inconclusive. Therefore injectable bulking agents in the treatment of fecal incontinence are not medically necessary due to insufficient evidence in published peer reviewed medical literature to support its use.

Medical Criteria
Not applicable.

Policy Guidelines:
Injectable bulking agents in the treatment of fecal incontinence are considered not medically necessary as there is insufficient evidence in published peer reviewed medical literature to support its use.

Coverage:
Benefits may vary. Please refer to the appropriate Evidence of Coverage, Subscriber Agreement, or benefit booklet for applicable "Not Medically Necessary" services.
Coding:
The following code is not medically necessary for all BCBSRI products:
L8605

Also Known As:
Not applicable.

Related Topics:
Not applicable.

Published:
Policy Update, April 2013

References:


U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). FDA approves injectable gel to treat fecal incontinence. FDA News. Silver Spring, MD: FDA; May 27, 2011.


History:
2/5/13 New policy approved.
reserves the right to review and revise this policy for any reason and at any time, with or without notice.