

Medical Coverage Policies

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Quantitative Sensory Testing

EFFECTIVE DATE	02/17/2009	LAST UPDATED	03/02/2010
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Description

Quantitative sensory testing (QST) systems are used for the noninvasive assessment and quantification of sensory nerve function in patients with symptoms of or the potential for neurologic damage or disease. QST systems measure and quantify the amount of physical stimuli required for sensory perception to occur in the patient. Stimuli used in QST includes touch, pressure, pain, thermal (warm and cold), or vibratory stimuli. Depending on the type of stimuli used, QST can assess small or large fiber dysfunction. QST with touch and vibration can evaluate large myelinated A alpha and A beta sensory fibers. Thermal stimuli can assess small myelinated fibers and unmyelinated sensory nerve function.

The American Association of Electrodiagnostic Medicine (AAEM) has reviewed the data for perception threshold testing and concluded that there is inadequate scientific literature meeting the above criteria to validate the clinical role of the procedure. Additionally, a 2003 report by the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) noted QST should not be used as a sole method for diagnosis of pathology. (1) The AAN indicated QST poses technical challenges in the methodology of testing, reproducibility, and psychophysical factors that limit the objectivity of testing results. Siao and Cros noted in a review that QST is influenced by many extraneous factors and may be subject to misinterpretation and misuse. (2) In addition, normal reference levels do not exist, and the reproducibility of QST has not been firmly established. Also, there are no generally recognized standards for QST techniques, performance, and interpretation.

A review of the literature on pressure-specified sensory device (PSSD) testing found insufficient evidence to demonstrate that PSSD testing will provide any further information than what can ordinarily be determined during standard evaluation and management of patients with potential nerve compression, disease, or damage.

Policy

Quantitative sensory testing, including current perception threshold testing and pressure-specified sensory device testing, is considered not medically necessary due to the lack of peer-reviewed medical literature to support its efficacy.

Coverage:

Benefits may vary. Please refer to the appropriate Member Certificate/Subscriber Agreement/Rite Care Contract for applicable not medically necessary benefits/coverage.

Coding:

0106T, 0107T, 0108T, 0109T, 0110T

Also Known As:

NA

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employer agreement, and those documents will supersede the provisions of this medical policy. For information on member-specific benefits, call the provider call center . If you provide services to a member which are determined to not be medically necessary (or in some cases medically necessary services which are non-covered benefits), you may not charge the member for the services unless you have informed the member and they have agreed in writing in advance to continue with the treatment at their own expense. Please refer to your participation agreement(s) for the applicable provisions.

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