

Clinical Policy: Cosmetic and Reconstructive Procedures

Reference Number: MC.CP.MP.31

Date of Last Revision: 08/26

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Description

Reconstructive surgery is performed on abnormal structures of the body caused by congenital defects, developmental abnormalities, trauma, surgery, infection, tumors or disease.¹

This policy outlines the medical necessity criteria for cosmetic and reconstructive procedures, which is intended to supplement the criteria in the Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) for cosmetic and reconstructive surgery: L33428, L39506, L38914, L35090, and L39051. The medical necessity criteria in these LCDs note coverage indications related to improving the function of abnormal body structures but do not provide detailed criteria for skin tag removal or scar/keloid revision or removal, limiting the ability to consistently determine medical necessity for reconstructive procedures that may benefit the member/enrollee. This policy criteria is sourced from Medicare Benefit Policy Manuals, LCDs, The Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act (WHCRA), as well as treatment guidelines from the American Society of Plastic Surgeons and FDA approved indications for facial dermal injections.

Benefits of reconstructive surgery performed on abnormal body structures include improvement in function and relief of pain and irritation. Risks of reconstructive surgery include infection, scarring, poor wound healing, bleeding, thrombosis and complications related to anesthesia. For this reason, reconstructive surgery should only be performed when proven safe and effective in order to reduce unnecessary risks.

Note:

- *This policy should only be used if there are no available procedure specific criteria.*
- *For criteria applicable to non-Medicare plans, please see CP.MP.31 Cosmetic and Reconstructive Procedures.*

Policy/Criteria

- I. It is the policy of health plans affiliated with Centene Corporation® that *reconstructive procedures* are considered **medically necessary** when the procedure is performed to improve the function of an abnormal body part caused by illness, trauma, or a congenital defect after failure of conservative therapy (unless conservative therapy is not standard of care for the condition, or is contraindicated).^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7}
- II. It is the policy of Medicare Health Plans affiliated with Centene Corporation that cosmetic surgery is not medically necessary and not a covered benefit when performed for the sole purpose of improving appearance.²

Background

Reconstructive surgery is performed on abnormal structures of the body caused by congenital defects, developmental abnormalities, previous or concurrent surgeries, trauma, infection, tumors or disease. It is generally performed to improve the functioning of a body part and may or may not restore a normal appearance.¹⁰ Functional impairment is a health condition in which the normal function of a part of the body or organ system is less than age appropriate at full capacity, such as decreased range of motion, diminished eyesight or hearing, etc. that variably impacts activities of daily living.¹¹

Cosmetic surgery is performed to reshape normal structures of the body in order to improve the appearance and self-esteem of a patient. It is generally considered not medically necessary.¹²

Coding Implications

This clinical policy references Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®). CPT® is a registered trademark of the American Medical Association. All CPT codes and descriptions are copyrighted 2025, American Medical Association. All rights reserved. CPT codes and CPT descriptions are from the current manuals and those included herein are not intended to be all-inclusive and are included for informational purposes only. Codes referenced in this clinical policy are for informational purposes only. Inclusion or exclusion of any codes does not guarantee coverage. Providers should reference the most up-to-date sources of professional coding guidance prior to the submission of claims for reimbursement of covered services.

CPT Codes That Support Coverage Criteria

CPT Codes Codes	Description
11200	Removal of skin tags, multiple fibrocutaneous tags, any area; up to and including 15 lesions
11201	Removal of skin tags, multiple fibrocutaneous tags, any area; each additional 10 lesions, or part thereof (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
11400	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), trunk, arms or legs; excised diameter 0.5 cm or less
11401	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), trunk, arms or legs; excised diameter 0.6 to 1.0 cm
11402	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), trunk, arms or legs; excised diameter 1.1 to 2.0 cm
11403	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), trunk, arms or legs; excised diameter 2.1 to 3.0 cm
11404	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), trunk, arms or legs; excised diameter 3.1 to 4.0 cm
11406	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), trunk, arms or legs; excised diameter over 4.0 cm
11420	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), scalp, neck, hands, feet, genitalia; excised diameter 0.5 cm or less

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11421	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), scalp, neck, hands, feet, genitalia; excised diameter 0.6 to 1.0 cm
11422	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), scalp, neck, hands, feet, genitalia; excised diameter 1.1 to 2.0 cm
11423	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), scalp, neck, hands, feet, genitalia; excised diameter 2.1 to 3.0 cm
11424	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), scalp, neck, hands, feet, genitalia; excised diameter 3.1 to 4.0 cm
11426	Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), scalp, neck, hands, feet, genitalia; excised diameter over 4.0 cm
11440	Excision, other benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), face, ears, eyelids, nose, lips, mucous membrane; excised diameter 0.5 cm or less
11441	Excision, other benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), face, ears, eyelids, nose, lips, mucous membrane; excised diameter 0.6 to 1.0 cm
11442	Excision, other benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), face, ears, eyelids, nose, lips, mucous membrane; excised diameter 1.1 to 2.0 cm
11443	Excision, other benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), face, ears, eyelids, nose, lips, mucous membrane; excised diameter 2.1 to 3.0 cm
11444	Excision, other benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), face, ears, eyelids, nose, lips, mucous membrane; excised diameter 3.1 to 4.0 cm
11446	Excision, other benign lesion including margins, except skin tag (unless listed elsewhere), face, ears, eyelids, nose, lips, mucous membrane; excised diameter over 4.0 cm
11920	Tattooing, intradermal introduction of insoluble opaque pigments to correct color defects of skin, including micropigmentation; 6.0 sq cm or less
11921	Tattooing, intradermal introduction of insoluble opaque pigments to correct color defects of skin, including micropigmentation; 6.1 to 20.0 sq cm
11922	Tattooing, intradermal introduction of insoluble opaque pigments to correct color defects of skin, including micropigmentation; each additional 20.0 sq cm, or part thereof (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
15773	Grafting of autologous fat harvested by liposuction technique to face, eyelids, mouth, neck, ears, orbits, genitalia, hands, and/or feet; 25 cc or less injectate
15774	Grafting of autologous fat harvested by liposuction technique to face, eyelids, mouth, neck, ears, orbits, genitalia, hands, and/or feet; each additional 25 cc injectate, or part thereof (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
15788	Chemical peel, facial; epidermal
15789	Chemical peel, facial; dermal
15792	Chemical peel, nonfacial; epidermal

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15793	Chemical peel, nonfacial; dermal
15830	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); abdomen, infraumbilical panniculectomy
15832	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); thigh
15833	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); leg
15834	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); hip
15835	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); buttock
15836	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); arm
15837	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); forearm or hand
15220	Full thickness graft, free, including direct closure of donor site, scalp, arms, and/or legs; 20 sq cm or less
15221	Full thickness graft, free, including direct closure of donor site, scalp, arms, and/or legs; each additional 20 sq cm, or part thereof (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
15771	Grafting of autologous fat harvested by liposuction technique to trunk, breasts, scalp, arms, and/or legs; 50 cc or less injectate
15772	Grafting of autologous fat harvested by liposuction technique to trunk, breasts, scalp, arms, and/or legs; each additional 50 cc injectate, or part thereof (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
15775	Punch graft for hair transplant; 1 to 15 punch grafts
15776	Punch graft for hair transplant; more than 15 punch grafts
15838	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); submental fat pad
15839	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); other area
15847	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy), abdomen (eg, abdominoplasty) (includes umbilical transposition and fascial plication) (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
15876	Suction assisted lipectomy; head and neck
15877	Suction assisted lipectomy; trunk
15878	Suction assisted lipectomy; upper extremity
15879	Suction assisted lipectomy; lower extremity
15792	Chemical peel, nonfacial; epidermal
15793	Chemical peel, nonfacial; dermal
17110	Destruction (eg, laser surgery, electrosurgery, cryosurgery, chemosurgery, surgical curettement), of benign lesions other than skin tags or cutaneous vascular proliferative lesions; up to 14 lesions
17111	Destruction (eg, laser surgery, electrosurgery, cryosurgery, chemosurgery, surgical curettement), of benign lesions other than skin tags or cutaneous vascular proliferative lesions; 15 or more lesions
19301	Mastectomy, partial (eg, lumpectomy, tylectomy, quadrantectomy, segmentectomy);

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19302	Mastectomy, partial (eg, lumpectomy, tyelectomy, quadrantectomy, segmentectomy); with axillary lymphadenectomy
19303	Mastectomy, simple, complete
19316	Mastopexy
19318	Breast reduction
19325	Breast augmentation with implant
19328	Removal of intact breast implant
19330	Removal of ruptured breast implant, including implant contents (eg, saline, silicone gel)
19340	Insertion of breast implant on same day of mastectomy (ie, immediate)
19342	Insertion or replacement of breast implant on separate day from mastectomy
19350	Nipple/areola reconstruction
19355	Correction of inverted nipples
19357	Tissue expander placement in breast reconstruction, including subsequent expansion(s)
19361	Breast reconstruction; with latissimus dorsi flap
19364	Breast reconstruction; with free flap (eg, fTRAM, DIEP, SIEA, GAP flap)
19367	Breast reconstruction; with single-pedicled transverse rectus abdominis myocutaneous (TRAM) flap
19368	Breast reconstruction; with single-pedicled transverse rectus abdominis myocutaneous (TRAM) flap, requiring separate microvascular anastomosis (supercharging)
19369	Breast reconstruction; with bipedicled transverse rectus abdominis myocutaneous (TRAM) flap
19370	Revision of peri-implant capsule, breast, including capsulotomy, capsulorrhaphy, and/or partial capsulectomy
19371	Peri-implant capsulectomy, breast, complete, including removal of all intracapsular contents
19380	Revision of reconstructed breast (eg, significant removal of tissue, re-advancement and/or re-inset of flaps in autologous reconstruction or significant capsular revision combined with soft tissue excision in implant-based reconstruction)
19396	Preparation of moulage for custom breast implant
19499	Unlisted procedure, breast
21120	Genioplasty; augmentation (autograft, allograft, prosthetic material)
21121	Genioplasty; sliding osteotomy, single piece
21122	Genioplasty; sliding osteotomies, 2 or more osteotomies (eg, wedge excision or bone wedge reversal for asymmetrical chin)
21123	Genioplasty; sliding, augmentation with interpositional bone grafts (includes obtaining autografts)
21137	Reduction forehead; contouring only
21138	Reduction forehead; contouring and application of prosthetic material or bone graft (includes obtaining autograft)

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21139	Reduction forehead; contouring and setback of anterior frontal sinus wall
21159	Reconstruction midface, LeFort III (extra and intracranial) with forehead advancement (eg, mono bloc), requiring bone grafts (includes obtaining autografts); without LeFort I
21160	Reconstruction midface, LeFort III (extra and intracranial) with forehead advancement (eg, mono bloc), requiring bone grafts (includes obtaining autografts); with LeFort I
21172	Reconstruction superior-lateral orbital rim and lower forehead, advancement or alteration, with or without grafts (includes obtaining autografts)
21175	Reconstruction, bifrontal, superior-lateral orbital rims and lower forehead, advancement or alteration (eg, plagiocephaly, trigonocephaly, brachycephaly), with or without grafts (includes obtaining autografts)
21179	Reconstruction, entire or majority of forehead and/or supraorbital rims; with grafts (allograft or prosthetic material)
21180	Reconstruction, entire or majority of forehead and/or supraorbital rims; with autograft (includes obtaining grafts)
21181	Reconstruction by contouring of benign tumor of cranial bones (eg, fibrous dysplasia), extracranial
21182	Reconstruction of orbital walls, rims, forehead, nasoethmoid complex following intra- and extracranial excision of benign tumor of cranial bone (eg, fibrous dysplasia), with multiple autografts (includes obtaining grafts); total area of bone grafting less than 40 sq cm
21183	Reconstruction of orbital walls, rims, forehead, nasoethmoid complex following intra- and extracranial excision of benign tumor of cranial bone (eg, fibrous dysplasia), with multiple autografts (includes obtaining grafts); total area of bone grafting greater than 40 sq cm but less than 80 sq cm
21184	Reconstruction of orbital walls, rims, forehead, nasoethmoid complex following intra- and extracranial excision of benign tumor of cranial bone (eg, fibrous dysplasia), with multiple autografts (includes obtaining grafts); total area of bone grafting greater than 80 sq cm
21230	Graft; rib cartilage, autogenous, to face, chin, nose or ear (includes obtaining graft)
21235	Graft; ear cartilage, autogenous, to nose or ear (includes obtaining graft)
21255	Reconstruction of zygomatic arch and glenoid fossa with bone and cartilage (includes obtaining autografts)
21256	Reconstruction of orbit with osteotomies (extracranial) and with bone grafts (includes obtaining autografts) (eg, micro-ophthalmia)
21260	Periorbital osteotomies for orbital hypertelorism, with bone grafts; extracranial approach
21261	Periorbital osteotomies for orbital hypertelorism, with bone grafts; combined intra- and extracranial approach

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21263	Periorbital osteotomies for orbital hypertelorism, with bone grafts; with forehead advancement
21267	Orbital repositioning, periorbital osteotomies, unilateral, with bone grafts; extracranial approach
21268	Orbital repositioning, periorbital osteotomies, unilateral, with bone grafts; combined intra- and extracranial approach
21270	Malar augmentation, prosthetic material
21275	Secondary revision of orbitocraniofacial reconstruction
21280	Medial canthopexy (separate procedure)
21282	Lateral canthopexy
21295	Reduction of masseter muscle and bone (eg, for treatment of benign masseteric hypertrophy); extraoral approach
21296	Reduction of masseter muscle and bone (eg, for treatment of benign masseteric hypertrophy); intraoral approach
54163	Repair incomplete circumcision
54360	Plastic operation on penis to correct angulation
54380	Plastic operation on penis for epispadias distal to external sphincter
54385	Plastic operation on penis for epispadias distal to external sphincter; with incontinence
54390	Plastic operation on penis for epispadias distal to external sphincter; with exstrophy of bladder
61550	Craniectomy for craniosynostosis; single cranial suture
61552	Craniectomy for craniosynostosis; multiple cranial sutures
61556	Craniotomy for craniosynostosis; frontal or parietal bone flap
61557	Craniotomy for craniosynostosis; bifrontal bone flap
61558	Extensive craniectomy for multiple cranial suture craniosynostosis (eg, cloverleaf skull); not requiring bone grafts
61559	Extensive craniectomy for multiple cranial suture craniosynostosis (eg, cloverleaf skull); recontouring with multiple osteotomies and bone autografts (e.g., barrel-stave procedure) (includes obtaining grafts)

HCPCS Codes	Description
G0429	Dermal filler injection(s) for the treatment of facial lipodystrophy syndrome (LDS) as a result of highly active antiretroviral therapy)
Q2026	Injection, Radiesse, 0.1 ml
Q2028	Injection, Sculptra, 0.5 mg

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Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Revision Date	Approval Date
Policy created. Reviewed by external specialist.	08/24	08/24
Annual review. Updated verbiage in Note under Description section for clarity. Removed Criteria I.A.4. regarding certain procedures that may be covered if improving appearance is the only benefit. Coding and descriptions reviewed. References reviewed and updated.	08/25	08/25
Policy description updated to note that the applicable LCDs do not provide sufficient coverage criteria to consistently determine medical necessity in all clinically appropriate scenarios.	12/25	12/25
Annual review. Combined I. and A. Removed I.A.1-I.A.3. Added CPT codes 54163, 54360, 54380, 54385, and 54390 to policy. References reviewed and updated. Reviewed by external specialist.	08/26	08/26

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Important Reminder

This clinical policy has been developed by appropriately experienced and licensed health care professionals based on a review and consideration of currently available generally accepted standards of medical practice; peer-reviewed medical literature; government agency/program approval status; evidence-based guidelines and positions of leading national health professional organizations; views of physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas affected by this clinical policy; and other available clinical information. The Health Plan makes no representations and accepts no liability with respect to the content of any external information used or relied upon in developing this clinical policy. This clinical policy is consistent with standards of medical practice current at the time that this clinical policy was approved. “Health Plan” means a health plan that has adopted this clinical policy and that is operated or administered, in whole or in part, by Centene Management Company, LLC, or any of such health plan’s affiliates, as applicable.

The purpose of this clinical policy is to provide a guide to medical necessity, which is a component of the guidelines used to assist in making coverage decisions and administering benefits. It does not constitute a contract or guarantee regarding payment or results. Coverage decisions and the administration of benefits are subject to all terms, conditions, exclusions and limitations of the coverage documents (e.g., evidence of coverage, certificate of coverage, policy, contract of insurance, etc.), as well as to state and federal requirements and applicable Health Plan-level administrative policies and procedures.

This clinical policy is effective as of the date determined by the Health Plan. The date of posting may not be the effective date of this clinical policy. This clinical policy may be subject to applicable legal and regulatory requirements relating to provider notification. If there is a discrepancy between the effective date of this clinical policy and any applicable legal or regulatory requirement, the requirements of law and regulation shall govern. The Health Plan retains the right to change, amend or withdraw this clinical policy, and additional clinical policies may be developed and adopted as needed, at any time.

This clinical policy does not constitute medical advice, medical treatment or medical care. It is not intended to dictate to providers how to practice medicine. Providers are expected to exercise professional medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care, and are solely responsible for the medical advice and treatment of members/enrollees. This clinical policy is not intended to

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recommend treatment for members/enrollees. Members/enrollees should consult with their treating physician in connection with diagnosis and treatment decisions.

Providers referred to in this clinical policy are independent contractors who exercise independent judgment and over whom the Health Plan has no control or right of control. Providers are not agents or employees of the Health Plan.

This clinical policy is the property of the Health Plan. Unauthorized copying, use, and distribution of this clinical policy or any information contained herein are strictly prohibited. Providers, members/enrollees and their representatives are bound to the terms and conditions expressed herein through the terms of their contracts. Where no such contract exists, providers, members/enrollees and their representatives agree to be bound by such terms and conditions by providing services to members/enrollees and/or submitting claims for payment for such services.

Note: For Medicaid members/enrollees, when state Medicaid coverage provisions conflict with the coverage provisions in this clinical policy, state Medicaid coverage provisions take precedence. Please refer to the state Medicaid manual for any coverage provisions pertaining to this clinical policy.

Note: For Medicare members/enrollees, to ensure consistency with the Medicare National Coverage Determinations (NCD) and Local Coverage Determinations (LCD), all applicable NCDs, LCDs and Medicare Coverage Articles should be reviewed prior to applying the criteria set forth in this clinical policy. Refer to the CMS website at <http://www.cms.gov> for additional information.

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