

MEDICAL POLICY



MEDICAL POLICY DETAILS	
Medical Policy Title	ABDOMINOPLASTY and PANNICULECTOMY
Policy Number	7.01.53
Category	Cosmetic
Effective Date	03/28/02
Revised Date	03/27/03, 04/22/04, 05/27/04, 08/04/04, 08/25/05, 06/22/06, 04/26/07, 04/24/08, 04/23/09, 04/29/10, 04/28/11, 04/26/12, 04/25/13, 04/24/14
Archived Date	04/23/15
Edited Date	04/28/16, 06/22/17, 04/26/18, 04/25/19
Product Disclaimer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a product excludes coverage for a service, it is not covered, and medical policy criteria do not apply. • If a commercial product (including an Essential Plan product) or a Medicaid product covers a specific service, medical policy criteria apply to the benefit. • If a Medicare product covers a specific service, and there is no national or local Medicare coverage decision for the service, medical policy criteria apply to the benefit.

POLICY STATEMENT

- I. An *abdominoplasty*, “tummy tuck”, or belt lipectomy is considered a cosmetic procedure and therefore, **not medically necessary**.
- II. A *panniculectomy* is considered **medically appropriate** when there is documentation of a significant functional impairment; such as persistent cellulitis, abscess, or skin ulceration that has been refractory, not recurrent (e.g., clears up then recurs), to medical therapy for at least six months, including a minimum of two 10-day courses of appropriate systemic antibiotic therapy.
- III. Panniculectomy performed concurrently with a ventral hernia repair is considered **medically necessary** if there is redundant skin/fat that is infected, is in the immediate vicinity of the hernia, and the surgeon believes it is likely bacterial seeding of implanted mesh used during the hernia repair may occur.
- IV. Panniculectomy and/or abdominoplasty solely for the correction of poorly fitting clothes, problems with hygiene, or difficulty exercising are considered **not medically necessary**, as no functional deficit exists.
- V. Panniculectomy is **not medically necessary** for the treatment of superficial inflammation or infection controlled with topical medications.
- VI. Panniculectomy and/or abdominoplasty solely for the correction of *low back pain* is considered **not medically necessary**, since the cause of low back pain in most individuals is multi-factorial and the primary cause may not be the abdominal panniculus.

Refer to Corporate Medical Policy# 7.01.11 regarding Cosmetic and Reconstructive Procedures

POLICY GUIDELINES

- I. Preoperative photographs are an absolute requirement for determination of medical appropriateness.
- II. The criteria for panniculectomy apply regardless of the cause of the excess fatty tissue and/or redundant skin. These criteria apply to removal of fatty tissue and/or redundant (excessive) skin caused by obesity and also apply to weight loss due to any reason, including bariatric surgery.

DESCRIPTION

Abdominoplasty, also referred to as a “tummy tuck”, is a surgical procedure, which tightens a lax anterior abdominal wall caused by diastasis recti (the separation of the 2 rectus muscles along the median line of the abdominal wall) and

Medical Policy: ABDOMINOPLASTY and PANNICULECTOMY

Policy Number: 7.01.53

Page: 2 of 3

removes excess fat and abdominal skin. This procedure reduces the appearance of a protruding abdomen, giving a flatter, firmer, tighter abdomen and thin waist and provides an overall improvement in the person’s shape and figure. Men and women who continue to have fat deposits and loose abdominal skin that won’t respond to diet and/or exercise or women with slack muscles and skin due to multiple pregnancies or large babies are the usual candidates for this procedure. Liposuction may be performed in conjunction with a “tummy tuck” to further sculpt the abdomen or remove fat from other areas such as the hip.

Belt lipectomy, a procedure that combines abdominoplasty with circumferential excision of skin and fat, is often more ideal for patients with circumferential truncal excess. Belt lipectomy improves abdominal contour, abdominal wall laxity, mons pubis ptosis, back rolls, waist contour, and buttocks contour. Initially, the procedure was performed on post-weight-reduction patients only, but its indications have been extended to three other groups: patients who were 30 to 50 pounds overweight, patients of normal weight who desired a significant overall truncal improvement, and obese patients with persistent intraabdominal excess.

Panniculectomy is the surgical resection of the overhanging “apron” of redundant skin and fat in the lower abdominal area. A panniculus is often seen in men or women who have had significant weight loss or in morbidly obese patients. The panniculus can cause difficulty in the fit of clothing, interference with personal hygiene, impaired ambulation, and be associated with lower back pain or pain in the panniculus itself. The redundant skin folds are predisposed to areas of intertrigo, which can give rise to infections of the skin (e.g., fungal dermatitis, folliculitis, subcutaneous abscesses) or panniculitis.

A panniculectomy may be performed in conjunction with other scheduled intra-abdominal surgery, such as a hysterectomy in obese patients, to improve surgical access and wound healing. Umbilical, ventral or other abdominal hernias may also be present and require surgical repair. The presence of diastasis recti does not imply the presence of a ventral hernia.

CODES

- *Eligibility for reimbursement is based upon the benefits set forth in the member’s subscriber contract.*
- ***CODES MAY NOT BE COVERED UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES. PLEASE READ THE POLICY AND GUIDELINES STATEMENTS CAREFULLY.***
- *Codes may not be all inclusive as the AMA and CMS code updates may occur more frequently than policy updates.*

CPT Codes

Code	Description
15830	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy); abdomen, infraumbilical panniculectomy
15834	hip
15847	Excision, excessive skin and subcutaneous tissue (includes lipectomy), abdomen (e.g. abdominoplasty) (includes umbilical transposition and fascial plication)
15877	Suction assisted lipectomy; trunk

Copyright © 2019 American Medical Association, Chicago, IL

HCPCS Codes

Code	Description
No code(s)	

ICD10 Codes

Code	Description
K42.9	Umbilical hernia without obstruction or gangrene
K43.2	Incisional hernia without obstruction or gangrene
K43.9	Ventral hernia without obstruction or gangrene

Proprietary Information of Univera Healthcare

Medical Policy: ABDOMINOPLASTY and PANNICULECTOMY**Policy Number: 7.01.53****Page: 3 of 3**

Code	Description
K46.9	Unspecified abdominal hernia without obstruction or gangrene
L02.211-L02.219	Cutaneous abscess of trunk (code range)
L03.311-L03.319	Cellulitis of trunk (code range)
L03.321-L03.326	Acute lymphangitis of trunk (code range)
L03.329	Acute lymphangitis of trunk, unspecified
L26	Exfoliative dermatitis
L30.4	Erythema intertrigo
L53.8	Other specified erythematous conditions
L54	Erythema in diseases classified elsewhere
L57.4	Cutis laxa senilis
L66.4	Folliculitis ulerythematososa reticulate
L90.4	Acrodermatitis chronica atrophicans
L90.8	Other atrophic disorders of skin
L91.8	Other hypertrophic disorders of the skin
L95.1	Erythema elevatum diutinum
L98.491-L98.499	Non-pressure chronic ulcer of skin of other sites (code range)
M54.5	Low back pain
M79.3	Panniculitis, unspecified

REFERENCES

*American Society of Plastic Surgeons. Abdominoplasty and panniculectomy unrelated to obesity or massive weight loss. Practice parameter. 2007 Jan [<http://www.plasticsurgery.org/Documents/medical-professionals/health-policy/evidence-practice/AbdominoplastyAndPanniculectomy.pdf>] accessed 5/17/17.

*American Society of Plastic Surgeons. Surgical treatment of skin redundancy for obese and massive weight loss patients. Practice parameter. 2007 Jan [<http://www.plasticsurgery.org/Documents/medical-professionals/health-policy/evidence-practice/Surgical-Treatment-of-Skin-Redundancy-Following-Massive-Weight-Loss.pdf>] accessed 5/17/17.

Chetta MD, et al. Complications in body contouring stratified according to weight loss method. Plast Surg (Oakv). 2016 Summer;24(2):103-6. Epub 2016 May 27.

Dreifuss SE, et al. Insurance coverage for massive weight loss panniculectomy: a national survey and implications for policy. Surg Obes Relat Dis. 2016 Feb;12(2):412-6.

*Key Article

KEY WORDS

Abdominoplasty, Belt Lipectomy, Lipectomy, Panniculectomy, Tummy Tuck

CMS COVERAGE FOR MEDICARE PRODUCT MEMBERS

Based upon review, abdominoplasty and/or panniculectomy are not addressed in a National or Local CMS coverage determination or policy.