Biofeedback and Neurofeedback

Biofeedback policy statements do not apply to Medicare Advantage.

DESCRIPTION

Biofeedback is a technique used to train an individual in self-regulation of a physiological processes not generally considered to be under voluntary control. Various measuring, recording instruments and monitors may be used in the training. Biofeedback training is done in individual sessions, group sessions, alone or with other behavioral therapies designed to teach relaxation. Biofeedback has been proposed as a treatment for a variety of conditions including anxiety, headache, urinary and fecal incontinence, constipation, pain, and temporomandibular joint dysfunction.

Neurofeedback describes techniques of providing feedback about neuronal activity, as measured by electroencephalogram (EEG), functional magnetic resonance imaging or near-infrared spectroscopy, to teach individuals to self-regulate brain activity. Neurofeedback differs from traditional forms of biofeedback in that the information fed back to the individual is a direct measure of global neuronal activity, or brain state. Purportedly, the individual may be trained to either increase or decrease the prevalence, amplitude, or frequency of specified EEG waveforms, depending on the changes in brain function associated with the particular disorder. Neurofeedback is being explored for the treatment of a variety of disorders including attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, Tourette syndrome, autism spectrum disorder, traumatic brain injury, seizure disorders, anxiety disorders, fibromyalgia, tinnitus, substance abuse disorders, depression, and as a stress management technique.

POLICY

- Biofeedback training or therapy is considered ***medically necessary*** if the medical appropriateness criteria are met. **(See Medical Appropriateness below).**
- Home Biofeedback for the treatment of urinary incontinence is considered ***investigational***.
- Biofeedback for the treatment of all other conditions/diseases is considered ***investigational.***
- Neurofeedback for the treatment of all conditions/diseases is considered ***investigational.***

MEDICAL APPROPRIATENESS

- Biofeedback may be indicated for **ANY ONE** of the following:
  - Migraine or tension-type headache if **ALL** the following criteria are met:
    - Pharmacologic treatment is inadequate or not indicated, by reason of **1 or more** of the following:
      - Individual is pregnant
      - Individual is attempting to become pregnant
      - Individual is breast-feeding
      - Insufficient or no response to multiple pharmacologic treatment attempts
      - Intolerance of multiple pharmacologic treatment attempts
      - History of long-term, frequent, or excessive use of analgesic or medications
    - **ABSENCE** of **ALL** the following:
      - Cluster headache
      - Unsupervised home use of biofeedback
    - No more than 20 sessions of biofeedback per twelve months
  - Constipation if **ALL** the following criteria are met:

- Failure of 3 months standard treatment, e.g., laxatives, dietary changes, exercise (as tolerated)
- Documentation of pelvic floor dyssynergia as indicated by **ANY ONE** of the following:
  - Inappropriate contraction of the pelvic floor muscles
  - Less than 20% relaxation of basal resting sphincter pressure
- Insufficient criteria for irritable bowel syndrome
- Up to 6 biofeedback sessions over 3 months

- Urinary incontinence if **ALL** of the following criteria are met:
  - Documentation of stress, urge, mixed, overflow, or persistent post-prostatectomy incontinence
  - Cognitively intact
  - Failure of conservative treatment (e.g., medication, bladder training, pelvic muscle training)
  - No clinically significant improvement in urinary incontinence after completing 4 weeks of pelvic muscle training
- Fecal incontinence if **ALL** of the following criteria are met:
  - Ability to voluntarily contract the sphincter
  - The individual has some degree of rectal sensation
  - Failure of conservative treatment (e.g., medication, diet changes, bowel training, pelvic muscle training)

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Any specific products referenced in this policy are just examples and are intended for illustrative purposes only. It is not intended to be a recommendation of one product over another and is not intended to represent a complete listing of all products available. These examples are contained in the parenthetical e.g. statement.
- We develop Medical Policies to provide guidance to Members and Providers. This Medical Policy relates only to the services or supplies described in it. The existence of a Medical Policy is not an authorization, certification, explanation of benefits or a contract for the service (or supply) that is referenced in the Medical Policy. For a determination of the benefits that a Member is entitled to receive under his or her health plan, the Member's health plan must be reviewed. If there is a conflict between the medical policy and a health plan or government program (e.g., TennCare), the express terms of the health plan or government program will govern.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There is a lack of scientific evidence to determine the effect of health outcomes or clinical efficacy for all conditions not listed as medically appropriate above.

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EFFECTIVE DATE

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