



Medical and Behavioral Health Policy Manual

Section: Medicine

Policy: II-25

TARGETED PHOTOTHERAPY FOR PSORIASIS

Description:

Psoriasis is a chronic, recurring skin disorder characterized by red, scaly skin plaques. Psoriasis is categorized as mild, affecting less than 5% of the body; moderate, affecting 5% to 20% of the skin; and severe, affecting more than 20% of the skin.

Targeted phototherapy describes the use of ultraviolet light that can be focused on specific body areas or lesions to treat patients with psoriasis. Conventional phototherapeutic options for the treatment of psoriasis include photochemotherapy with psoralen plus ultraviolet A (PUVA) and both broad and narrowband ultraviolet B (UVB). Narrowband ultraviolet B (NB-UVB) is more effective than broadband UVB and is used more commonly. Xenon chloride (XeCl) lasers and lamps have been developed as **targeted** NB-UVB treatment devices. The advantage of hand-held **targeted** phototherapy devices is the ability to specifically target individual lesions and limit the exposure to the surrounding normal tissues. Examples of **targeted** phototherapy devices include XTRAC™, VTRAC™, BClear™, and Excilite™.

Policy:

Targeted phototherapy is considered **ACCEPTED MEDICAL PRACTICE** for the treatment of psoriasis comprising 5% to 20% body area for which NB-UVB or PUVA are indicated.

Targeted phototherapy is considered **ACCEPTED MEDICAL PRACTICE** for the treatment of psoriasis comprising less than 20% body area that is unresponsive to conservative treatment.

Targeted phototherapy is considered **INVESTIGATIVE** for the first-line treatment of mild psoriasis.

Targeted phototherapy is considered **INVESTIGATIVE** for the treatment of generalized psoriasis or psoriatic arthritis.

Coverage: **PRIOR AUTHORIZATION: NO**
Coding: Codes specific to policy:
CPT: 96920 Laser treatment for inflammatory skin disease (psoriasis); total area less than 250 sq cm
96921 Laser treatment for inflammatory skin disease (psoriasis); total area 250 sq sm to 500 sq cm
96922 Laser treatment for inflammatory skin disease (psoriasis); total area over 500 sq cm

Medical Policy Committee Review: Developed June 11, 2003
Reviewed October 13, 2004
Reviewed September 14, 2005
Reviewed October 11, 2006
Revised September 12, 2007

Medical Policy Subcommittee Review:
Cross Reference:

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