

Clinical Policy: Biofeedback

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[Coding Implications](#)
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Description

Biofeedback therapy provides visual, auditory or other evidence of the status of certain body functions so that a person can exert voluntary control over the functions, and thereby alleviate an abnormal bodily condition. Biofeedback therapy often uses electrical devices to transform bodily signals indicative of such functions as heart rate, blood pressure, skin temperature, salivation, peripheral vasomotor activity, and gross muscle tone into a tone or light, the loudness or brightness of which shows the extent of activity in the function being measured.¹

Policy/Criteria

- I. It is the policy of health plans affiliated with Centene Corporation[®] that biofeedback is **medically necessary** for the following indications when the basic and treatment-specific criteria in A and B are met.

Reconsideration of medical necessity should be made if more than 14 biofeedback treatments sessions in a 12 month period are necessary. For treatment of fecal and/or urinary incontinence, objective improvement is usually noted within 4 sessions.

A. Basic Criteria- meets all of the following:

1. The individual is motivated to actively participate in the treatment plan, including being responsive to the care plan requirements (e.g., practice and follow-through at home);
2. The individual is capable of participating in the treatment plan (physically as well as intellectually);
3. The condition can be appropriately treated with biofeedback (e.g., existing pathology does not prevent success of the treatment);
4. There is a readily identifiable and measurable response;
5. Biofeedback training is performed by a physician or qualified non-physician practitioner which can include physical and occupational therapists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and clinical nurse specialists.

B. Treatment-Specific Criteria - meets any of the following:

1. Stress, urge, or mixed urinary incontinence in cognitively intact adult females who have failed a documented four week trial of Kegel pelvic muscle exercise training;
2. Dysfunctional voiding in children, when other alternative options have been unsuccessful (e.g., timed voiding, prophylactic antibacterial therapy for recurrent urinary tract infections, short term anticholinergic medications to assist developing a normal voiding pattern);
3. Fecal incontinence when either of the following criteria have been met:
 - a. Anorectal manometry demonstrates weakness of the external anal sphincter;

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- b. Decreased ability to perceive rectal distension because of nerve injury;
4. Chronic constipation in patients with organic neuromuscular impairment who have difficulty with outlet obstruction;
5. Anal muscle abnormalities of spasticity, incapacitating muscle spasm, and/or muscle weakness;
6. Thermal biofeedback combined with relaxation training or electromyography (EMG) biofeedback as treatment options in management of tension and migraine headaches;
7. Chronic pain as part of a rehabilitation program;
8. Muscle re-education of specific muscle groups or for treating pathological muscle abnormalities of spasticity, incapacitating muscle spasm (including pain due to spasm), or weakness when more conventional treatments (heat, cold, massage, exercise, support) have not been successful.

II. It is the policy of health plans affiliated with Centene Corporation that biofeedback (including neurofeedback) is **experimental/investigational** for any other circumstances than those specified above.

Background

The three most commonly used forms of biofeedback therapy are: (1) electromyography (EMG), which measures muscle tension; (2) thermal biofeedback, which measures skin temperature; and (3) neurofeedback or electroencephalography (EEG), which measures brain wave activity. Various forms of biofeedback appear to be effective for a narrow range of health problems.

First line treatment of urinary incontinence (stress, urgency, mixed) consists of behavioral treatments with an emphasis on improving quality of life. Initial treatment includes lifestyle modifications and pelvic floor muscle exercise (Kegel exercises). Biofeedback is used as an adjunct to pelvic floor muscle exercises. By providing individuals with concurrent feedback on muscle tone, biofeedback is intended to improve the patient's ability to perform pelvic muscle exercises. Augmented versions also use abdominal and perineal EMG recordings to demonstrate improper contraction of abdominal and gluteal muscles. A systematic review and meta-analysis of 17 randomized or quasi-randomized trials found that compared with women who received pelvic floor muscle exercises alone, those that also received biofeedback were more likely to report improvement or cure of urinary incontinence.¹

Dysfunctional voiding in children is a learned behavior of abnormal urination, which often evolves from attempts to suppress impending or active bladder contractions by inappropriately contracting the pelvic floor muscles, thereby tightening the urinary sphincter complex. Symptoms vary but daytime wetness and urinary tract infections are common. Other urinary symptoms include urgency, frequency, infrequency, and constipation. Usual care of dysfunctional voiding includes voiding on a schedule and keeping voiding diaries. Kegel or pelvic floor exercises may help children gain conscious control of pelvic floor musculature and urination.² Biofeedback teaches children how to identify and control the muscle groups involved in voiding. It is reserved for children with dysfunctional voiding despite an adequate trial of conservative therapy and/or pharmacotherapy. Available studies suggest that biofeedback-directed pelvic floor exercises can improve urinary function in dysfunctional voiding, including

those who have previously failed conservative treatment. Biofeedback therapy may result in a faster resolution of symptoms than traditional pelvic floor training without biofeedback.

Biofeedback therapy improves symptoms in more than 70% of patients with defecatory disorders. Biofeedback can be useful in the treatment of constipation to train patients to relax their pelvic floor muscles during straining and to correlate relaxation and pushing to achieve defecation. By the relearning process, the non-relaxing pelvic floor is gradually suppressed and normal coordination restored. Biofeedback has been shown to improve rectoanal coordination during defecation and symptoms of constipation despite reduced laxative use. Biofeedback is also used in the treatment of fecal incontinence.³

American Gastroenterological Association

Pelvic floor retraining by biofeedback therapy rather than laxatives is recommended for defecatory disorders (strong recommendation, high-quality evidence).³

American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons

Biofeedback may be considered as an initial treatment for patients with fecal incontinence and some preserved voluntary sphincter contraction when there is no response to simple dietary modification, medications, and other supportive measures. In their most recent guidelines on the treatment of fecal incontinence, the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons assign a strong recommendations in favor of biofeedback.⁴

American Academy of Neurology

The American Academy of Neurology recommends relaxation training, thermal biofeedback combined with relaxation training, EMG biofeedback, and cognitive-behavioral therapy as treatment options for prevention of migraine (Grade A). Specific recommendations regarding which of these to use for specific patients cannot be made.⁵

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 2017, 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	Description
90901	Biofeedback training by any modality
90911	Biofeedback training, perineal muscles, anorectal or urethral sphincter, including EMG and/or manometry

HCPCS Codes	Description
N/A	

ICD-10-CM Diagnosis Codes that Support Coverage Criteria

ICD-10-CM Code	Description
G43.001 - G43.719	Migraine headache
G44.201 - G44.209	Tension-type headache
K59.00 - K59.09	Constipation
K59.4	Anal spasm
M62.40 - M62.49	Contracture of muscle
M62.50 - M62.59	Muscle wasting and atrophy, not elsewhere classified
N39.3 - N39.498	Stress incontinence
R15.0 - R15.9	Fecal incontinence

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	Approval Date
Policy adopted from Health Net NMP168 Biofeedback	06/17	07/17

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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. This clinical policy is not intended to recommend treatment for members. Members should consult with their treating physician in connection with diagnosis and treatment decisions.

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Note: For Medicaid members, 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, 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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