



Plugs for Enteric and Anorectal Fistula Repair

Published: 09/01/2023

Next Review: 05/2024

Last Review: 07/2023

Medicare Link(s) Revised: N/A

IMPORTANT REMINDER

The Medicare Advantage Medical Policy manual is not intended to override the member Evidence of Coverage (EOC), which defines the insured's benefits, nor is it intended to dictate how providers are to practice medicine. Physicians and other health care providers are expected to exercise their medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care for the individual member, including care that may be both medically reasonable and necessary.

The Medicare Advantage medical policies are designed to provide guidance regarding the decision-making process for the coverage or non-coverage of services or procedures in accordance with the member EOC and Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) policies and manuals, along with general CMS rules and regulations. In the event of a conflict, applicable CMS policy or EOC language will take precedence over the Medicare Advantage Medical Policy. In the absence of a specific CMS coverage determination for a requested service, item or procedure, the health plan may apply CMS regulations, as well as their Medical Policy Manual or other applicable utilization management vendor criteria developed with an objective, evidence-based process using scientific evidence, current generally accepted standards of medical practice, and authoritative clinical practice guidelines.

Some services or items may appear to be medically indicated for an individual, but may be a direct exclusion of Medicare or the member's benefit plan. Medicare and member EOCs exclude from coverage, among other things, services or procedures considered to be investigational (experimental) or cosmetic, as well as services or items considered not medically reasonable and necessary under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, §1862(a)(1)(A). In some cases, providers may bill members for these non-covered services or procedures. Providers are encouraged to inform members in advance when they may be financially responsible for the cost of non-covered or excluded services. Members, their appointed representative, or a treating provider can request coverage of a service or item by submitting a pre-service organization determination prior to services being rendered.

DESCRIPTION

Enteric fistulas are the abnormal passage between the gastrointestinal (GI) tract and other abdominal organs, the chest, or skin. An anal fistula is an abnormal communication between the interior of the anal canal or rectum and the skin surface, though rarer forms may communicate with the vagina or other pelvic structures, including the bowel. Most fistulas begin as anorectal abscesses, which are thought to arise from infection in the glands around the anal canal. When the abscess opens spontaneously into the anal canal (or has been opened surgically), a fistula may occur. Fistula plugs are anchored in the fistulae (abnormal openings, usually in the intestine or anus) to provide scaffolding for new tissue growth, aiming to promote healing and fistula closure. The plug is absorbed into the body in 6-8 weeks.

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE POLICY CRITERIA

CMS Coverage Manuals*	None
National Coverage Determinations (NCDs)*	None
Noridian Healthcare Solutions (Noridian) Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) and Articles (LCAs)*	None
Medical Policy Manual	<p><i>Medicare coverage guidance is not available for plugs used for enteric or anorectal fistula repair. Therefore, the health plan's medical policy is applicable.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Plugs for Enteric and Anorectal Fistula Repair, Surgery, Policy No. 175 (see "NOTE" below)</p>

NOTE: If a procedure or device lacks scientific evidence regarding safety and efficacy because it is investigational or experimental, the service is noncovered as not reasonable and necessary to treat illness or injury. ([Medicare IOM Pub. No. 100-04, Ch. 23, §30 A](#)). According to Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, §1862(a)(1)(A), only medically reasonable and necessary services are covered by Medicare. In the absence of a NCD, LCD, or other coverage guideline, CMS guidelines allow a Medicare Advantage Organization (MAO) to make coverage determinations, applying an **objective, evidence-based process, based on authoritative evidence**. ([Medicare IOM Pub. No. 100-16, Ch. 4, §90.5](#)). The Medicare Advantage Medical Policy - Medicine Policy No. M-149 - provides further details regarding the plan's evidence-assessment process (see Cross References).

POLICY GUIDELINES

REGULATORY STATUS

DEVICE	COMPANY	DATE APPROVED
SIS Fistula Plug (K050337)	Cook Biotech Inc.	03/09/2005
Surgisis RVP Recto-Vaginal Fistula Plug (K062729)	Cook Biotech Inc.	10/10/2006
Surgisis Biodesign Enterocutaneous Fistula Plug (K082682)	Cook Biotech Inc.	02/27/2009
GORE® BIO-A® Fistula Plug (K083266)	W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc.	03/27/2009
Biodesign Enterocutaneous Fistula Plug (K150668)	Cook Biotech Inc.	12/09/2015

Note, the fact a service or procedure has been issued a CPT/HCPCS code or is FDA approved for a specific indication does not, in itself, make the procedure medically reasonable and necessary. The FDA determines safety and effectiveness of a device or drug, but does not establish medical necessity. While Medicare may adopt FDA determinations regarding safety

and effectiveness, CMS or Medicare contractors evaluate whether or not the drug or device is reasonable and necessary for the Medicare population under §1862(a)(1)(A).

CROSS REFERENCES

[Investigational \(Experimental\) Services, New and Emerging Medical Technologies and Procedures, and Other Non-Covered Services](#), Medicine, Policy No. M-149

REFERENCES

None

CODING

Codes	Number	Description
CPT	46707	Repair of anorectal fistula with plug (e.g., porcine small intestine mucosa [SIS])
	44799	Unlisted procedure, small intestine
	45499	Unlisted laparoscopy procedure, rectum
	58999	Unlisted procedure, female genital system (nonobstetrical)
HCPCS	None	

***IMPORTANT NOTE:** Medicare Advantage medical policies use the most current Medicare references available at the time the policy was developed. Links to Medicare references will take viewers to external websites outside of the health plan's web control as these sites are not maintained by the health plan.