

Medical Coverage Policy | Knee Walker



EFFECTIVE DATE: 05|01|2017

POLICY LAST UPDATED: 02|20|2018

OVERVIEW

A mobility aid is a device designed to assist walking or otherwise improve the mobility of people with a mobility impairment. This is a reimbursement policy which addresses the payment guidelines for the knee walker or knee crutch.

MEDICAL CRITERIA

Not applicable

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

Not applicable.

POLICY STATEMENT

BlueCHiP for Medicare and Commercial

A knee walker (e.g., Roll-A-Bout Walker, Rolleraid, Turning Leg Caddy) or a kneeling crutch (e.g., iWALKFree) as a rental only is medically necessary for short term use following a below-the-knee injuries/conditions when the member is non- weight bearing on one extremity and unable to safely able to use a standard walker or crutch. As this is for short term rehabilitation, the rental period is limited to 4 month rental period.

COVERAGE

Benefits may vary between groups and contracts. Please refer to the appropriate Benefit Booklet, Evidence of Coverage or Subscriber Agreement for applicable durable medical equipment benefits/coverage.

BACKGROUND

The basic purpose of a mobility device is to provide a member with impairment of functional mobility who is unable to benefit from a cane or walker, the ability to perform basic life functions or mobility-related activities of daily living (e.g., cook, eat, go to the bathroom, etc.). Canes, crutches and walkers are typically devices that assist a person who has a mobility impairment due to a medical reason.

A crutch substitute is a hands-free device that consists of a long metal bar with a platform attached at knee height at a 90-degree angle. The device has pads on the platform and straps to hold the leg. The patient places the bent knee on the platform and secures the upper leg to the metal bar and the knee to the platform. The device can have a rounded rubber foot or can have wheels attached to the distal end. The device can be used to replace a missing lower leg or to remove weight bearing from an injured lower leg.

The most common type of *knee walker resembles a scooter* with an elevated pad to rest the knee of your injured leg on. You then propel yourself with your good leg and steer the unit by turning the handlebar to control the direction of the front wheels. All models are designed to *keep your leg with the injury fully non-weight bearing* while still providing easy mobility. You will be at your normal height, so you are able to still perform daily tasks.

Use of this device provides stability and safety when a person is non- weight bearing after a lower leg injury or surgery and unable to use crutches or a walker safely.

CODING

BlueCHiP for Medicare and Commercial

The following code is payable as rental only:

E0118RR Crutch substitute, lower leg platform, with or without wheels, each

Note: Claims filed without the RR modifier will deny as non covered as this device is covered only as a rental.

RELATED POLICIES

Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

PUBLISHED

Provider Update, April 2018

Provider Update, April 2017

REFERENCES:

Not applicable

CLICK THE ENVELOPE ICON BELOW TO SUBMIT COMMENTS

This medical policy is made available to you for informational purposes only. It is not a guarantee of payment or a substitute for your medical judgment in the treatment of your patients. Benefits and eligibility are determined by the member's subscriber agreement or member certificate and/or the employer agreement, and those documents will supersede the provisions of this medical policy. For information on member-specific benefits, call the provider call center. If you provide services to a member which are determined to not be medically necessary (or in some cases medically necessary services which are non-covered benefits), you may not charge the member for the services unless you have informed the member and they have agreed in writing in advance to continue with the treatment at their own expense. Please refer to your participation agreement(s) for the applicable provisions. This policy is current at the time of publication; however, medical practices, technology, and knowledge are constantly changing. BCBSRI reserves the right to review and revise this policy for any reason and at any time, with or without notice. Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

