Medical Coverage Policy | Nutrient/Nutritional Panel Testing

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10|01|2021
POLICY LAST UPDATED: 02|02|2022

OVERVIEW
This policy if for nutritional panel testing when used to identify nutritional deficiencies that will lead to personalized nutritional supplement recommendations. Testing is proposed both for healthy individuals to optimize health and for patients with chronic conditions (eg, mood disorders, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue) to specify supplements that will ameliorate symptoms.

MEDICAL CRITERIA
Not applicable

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION
Not applicable

POLICY STATEMENT
Medicare Advantage Plans and Commercial Products
Nutrient/nutritional panel testing is considered not covered for Medicare Advantage Plans and not medically necessary for Commercial Products for all indications including but not limited to testing for nutritional deficiencies in patients with mood disorders, fibromyalgia, unexplained fatigue, and healthy individuals.

COVERAGE
Medicare Advantage Plans and Commercial Products
Benefits may vary between groups/contracts. Please refer to the Evidence of Coverage or Subscriber Agreement for applicable not medically necessary/not covered benefits/coverage.

BACKGROUND
Nutritional panel testing aims to identify nutritional deficiencies that will lead to personalized nutritional supplement recommendations. Testing is proposed both for healthy individuals to optimize health and for patients with chronic conditions (eg, mood disorders, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue) to specify supplements that will ameliorate symptoms.

Genova Diagnostics offers nutritional/nutrient panel testing. Among the tests this company offers is NutrEval FMV, which involves analysis of urine and blood samples and provides information on more than 100 markers including organic acids, amino acids, fatty acids, markers of oxidative stress (direct measurement of glutathione and CoQ10, and markers of oxidative injury and DNA damage) and nutrient elements.

Genova Diagnostics produces a report that includes test results categorized as normal, borderline, and high need, along with recommendations for supplements and dosages for items categorized as high need. NutrEval FMV patient reports can recommend supplementation or any of the nutrients if they are found to be areas of high need.

SpectraCell Laboratories offers a micronutrient test that measures functional deficiencies at the cellular level. The test assesses how well the body uses 33 vitamins, minerals, amino and fatty acids, antioxidants, and metabolites. SpectraCell categorizes test results into adequate, borderline, and deficient, and offers supplementation suggestions based on each patient's deficiencies.

Direct evidence of clinical utility is provided by studies that have compared health outcomes for patients managed with and without the test. Because these are intervention studies, the preferred evidence would be from randomized controlled trials (RCTs).

No RCTs were identified that assessed the clinical utility of nutrient/nutritional panel testing for mood disorders, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, or optimization of health and fitness.

Several systematic reviews and meta-analyses evaluating associations between the indications of interest and specific nutrient deficiencies were identified. No systematic reviews or meta-analyses were identified in the association between nutritional deficiencies and unexplained fatigue. A limitation of all reviews is that, although they compared low and high levels of nutrient levels, none addressed whether these low levels constituted actual deficiencies in a particular nutrient.

For individuals who have mood disorders, fibromyalgia, or unexplained fatigue, or healthy individuals who seek to optimize health and fitness who receive nutritional panel testing, the evidence includes several systematic reviews on the association between a single condition and a single nutrient and on the treatment of specific conditions with nutritional supplements. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, change in disease status, and functional outcomes. There was no evidence of associations between fibromyalgia or unexplained fatigue and nutrient deficiencies. Systematic reviews have found statistically significant associations between depression and levels of several nutrients; however, there is no evidence that nutrient supplementation for patients with depression improves health outcomes. Also, there is no direct evidence on the health benefits of nutritional panel testing for any condition, including testing healthy individuals, and no evidence that nutritional panel testing is superior to testing for individual nutrients for any condition. The evidence is insufficient to determine that the technology results in an improvement in the net health outcomes.

COVERAGE

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CODING

There is not a specific CPT code for this panel testing. Therefore, claims should be filed with Unlisted CPT code 81479.

While there may be specific CPT codes for some of the components of the panel testing, claims for the entire panel **MUST** be filed with the Unlisted CPT code noted above**.**

If any of the following codes are filed for nutrient/nutritional panel testing, the claim will deny as not covered for Medicare Advantage Plans and not medically necessary for Commercial Products for the ICD-10 indications listed below:

82746 Folic acid; serum
83735 Magnesium
83785 Manganese
84590 Vitamin A
84630 Zinc
82128 Amino acids; multiple, qualitative, each specimen
82136 Amino acids, 2 to 5 amino acids, quantitative, each specimen

Not covered and not medically necessary ICD-10 indications:

F30.10-F39 Mood [affective] disorders code range
M79.7 Fibromyalgia
R53.81-R53.83 Other malaise and fatigue code range

RELATED POLICIES
Not applicable

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