

Medical Coverage Policies

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Suprachoroidal Delivery of Pharmacological Agents

EFFECTIVE DATE	10/06/2009	LAST UPDATED	07/20/2010
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Delivery:

Delivery of pharmacological agents to the suprachoroidal space is being investigated for treatment of diseases of the retina and optic nerve. A microcannula system is used that combines a drug delivery channel with a fiberoptic light source for localization of the cannula tip. One potential advantage of suprachoroidal injection would be the ability to minimize systemic side-effects while delivering higher local tissue levels of drugs. This proposed benefit assumes that high local levels lead to improved outcomes. Weighed against this potential benefit is the risk of localized tissue damage from the microcannula. This technique is being investigated for the treatment of subchoroidal neovascularization related to diseases of the retina such as, age-related macular degeneration, pathologic myopia, central serous chorioretinopathy, presumed ocular histoplasmosis.

Various parts of the suprachoroidal delivery system have received 510(k) marketing clearance from the FDA. The iTrack™ (iScience Interventional) is a flexible microcannula designed to allow atraumatic cannulation of spaces in the eye for infusion and aspiration of fluids during surgery. The microcannula incorporates an optical fiber to allow transmission of light to the microcannula tip for surgical illumination and guidance. The microcannula "is indicated for fluid infusion and aspiration, as well as illumination, during surgery."

Medical Criteria:

Not applicable

Policy:

Suprachoroidal delivery of a pharmacologic agent is considered not medically necessary as there is insufficient peer-reviewed scientific literature to demonstrate its effectiveness.

Coverage:

Benefits may vary between groups/contracts. Please refer to the appropriate evidence of coverage, subscriber agreements, or BlueCHIP for Rite Care contract for applicable "Not Medically Necessary Services."

Coding:

The following code is not medically necessary:

0186T

Publications:

Provider Update, November 2009

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