



Virtual Colonoscopy (CT colonography)

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Definition

Virtual colonoscopy (VC), also known as CT colonography, utilizes helical computed tomography of the abdomen and pelvis to visualize the colon lumen, along with 3-D reconstruction. The test requires colonic preparation similar to that required for standard colonoscopy (instrument colonoscopy), and air insufflation to achieve colonic distention.

Guideline

Members are eligible for screening/diagnostic VC coverage when either of the following indications is applicable:

1. Failed (incomplete) fiberoptic colonoscopy.

Notes must be provided to the Plan upon request when either of the following scenarios is applicable:

- Immediate VC post fiberoptic failure.
 - Future VC post fiberoptic failure.
2. Fiberoptic colonoscopy is contraindicated as a result of any of the following conditions/circumstances:
 - Recent myocardial infarction.
 - Bleeding disorder.
 - Contraindication to sedation.

Limitations/Exclusions

Screening VC is not considered medically necessary (when using ICD-9-CM V-76.51 — special screening for malignant neoplasms, colon) in the absence of contraindications to the performance of standard fiberoptic colonoscopy

Applicable Procedure Codes

74261	Computed tomographic (CT) colonography, diagnostic, including image postprocessing; without contrast material
74262	Computed tomographic (CT) colonography, diagnostic, including image postprocessing; with contrast material(s) including non-contrast images, if performed.
74263.	Computed tomographic (CT) colonography, screening, including image postprocessing

Applicable ICD-10 Diagnosis Codes

Z53.8	Procedure and treatment not carried out for other reasons
Z53.9	Procedure and treatment not carried out, unspecified reason

References

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Mulhall BP, Veerappan GR, Jackson JL, Meta-analysis: computed tomographic colonography, *Ann Intern Med*, 2005; 635-650.

Pickhardt PJ, Taylor AJ, Kim DH, et al., Screening for colorectal neoplasia with CT colonography: initial experience from the 1st year of coverage by third-party payers, *Radiology*, 2006; 241: 417-425.

Sosna J, Morrin MM, Kruskal JB, et al., CT colonography of colorectal polyps: a meta-analysis, *AJR*, 2003; 181: 1593-1598.

Specialty-matched clinical peer review.