

# Authorization criteria: Knee arthroscopy for adults

**For BCN HMO<sup>SM</sup> (commercial) and BCN Advantage<sup>SM</sup> members only**

Clinical review is required for adult members (age  $\geq 18$ ). The medical necessity criteria are outlined below.

CPT codes: \*27332, \*27333, \*27425, \*29870, \*29873, \*29874, \*29875, \*29876, \*29877, \*29879, \*29880, \*29881, \*29882, \*29883, \*29885, \*29886 and \*29887

## **Diagnostic arthroscopy with or without synovial biopsy**

ALL of the following:

1. At least one of the following symptoms:
  - a. Joint pain
  - b. Locking
  - c. Knee giving way during activities involving knee rotation by history
  - d. Pain with range of motion
  - e. Limited range of motion
  - f. Crepitus
  - g. Joint line tenderness
  - h. Joint effusion or swelling
2. BOTH imaging findings:
  - a. X-ray nondiagnostic for etiology of symptoms or findings
  - b. MRI or CT arthrogram nondiagnostic for etiology of symptoms or findings
3. Continued symptoms and findings after treatment with ALL the following:
  - a. NSAIDs or acetaminophen for at least 3 weeks
  - b. Physician-directed home exercise program or physical therapy for at least 6 weeks
  - c. Activity modification for at least 6 weeks

## **Chondroplasty**

ALL of the following:

1. At least ONE of the following:
  - a. Knee pain
  - b. Knee giving way during activities involving knee rotation by history
2. At least ONE of the following findings:
  - a. Limited range of motion
  - b. Crepitus
  - c. Joint effusion or swelling
3. No indication of severe degenerative changes in bone or cartilage identified by imaging (osteoarthritis is NOT the only abnormality identified by imaging)
4. Continued symptoms or findings after treatment within the last year with ALL:
  - a. NSAIDs or acetaminophen for at least 3 weeks
  - b. Physician-directed home exercise program or physical therapy for at least 6 weeks
  - c. Activity modification for at least 6 weeks

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## **Lateral release**

ALL of the following:

1. EITHER of the following:
  - a. Patellar or peripatellar pain
  - b. Retropatellar crepitus (crackling or popping sounds, or grating sensation)
2. BOTH of the following imaging findings:
  - a. Excessive or abnormal patellar tilt by physical exam or imaging
  - b. No or minimal changes of patellofemoral articular surfaces (where the lower end of the thigh bone and kneecap join) identified by X-ray
3. Continued symptoms or findings after treatment with ALL:
  - a. NSAIDs or acetaminophen for at least 3 weeks
  - b. Physician-directed home exercise program or physical therapy for at least 12 weeks
  - c. External joint support for at least 12 weeks

## **Removal or stabilization of intra-articular osteochondral lesion or loose body**

ALL of the following:

1. At least ONE of the following:
  - a. Knee pain
  - b. Locking of the knee
  - c. Knee giving way during activities involving knee rotation by history of the knee
2. At least ONE of the following:
  - a. Limited range of motion
  - b. Swelling of the knee
3. Osteochondral lesion or loose body by imaging

## **Resection or repair of stable meniscal tear**

ALL of the following:

1. At least TWO of the following:
  - a. Joint effusion
  - b. Joint line tenderness
  - c. Pain with flexion and rotation
  - d. Knee giving way during activities involving knee rotation by history
2. Isolated meniscal tear identified by imaging
3. Continued symptoms or findings after treatment with ALL:
  - a. NSAIDs or acetaminophen for at least 3 weeks
  - b. Physician-directed home exercise program or physical therapy for at least 4 weeks
  - c. Activity modification for at least 4 weeks

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## **Resection or repair of unstable meniscal tear**

ALL of the following:

1. At least ONE of the following:
  - a. True knee locking (the knee becomes “stuck” and cannot fully extend immediately after an injury) by history or physical exam. True knee locking is not pseudolocking after an injury due to increased joint fluid, pain and muscle spasm.
  - b. McMurray test that is positive
2. EITHER:
  - a. Meniscal tear identified by imaging
  - b. Advanced imaging not feasible due to knee in locked position

## **Synovectomy (limited)**

ALL of the following:

1. At least ONE of the following:
  - a. Knee giving way during activities involving knee rotation by history
  - b. Joint pain
2. BOTH of the following findings:
  - a. Tenderness over suspected plica
  - b. Imaging nondiagnostic for etiology of symptoms and findings
3. Continued symptoms or findings after treatment within the last year with ALL:
  - a. NSAIDs or acetaminophen for at least 3 weeks
  - b. Physician-directed home exercise program or physical therapy for at least 6 weeks
  - c. Activity modification for at least 6 weeks

## **Synovectomy (major)**

ALL of the following:

1. Knee pain
2. Limited range of motion
3. Joint effusion or swelling
4. No or minimal degenerative changes in bone or cartilage identified by X-ray
5. Continued symptoms or findings after disease-specific treatment  $\geq 12$  weeks within the last year.

## **References**

Change Healthcare's InterQual<sup>®</sup> 2017 Procedures Criteria, Arthroscopy, Diagnostic, +/- Synovial Biopsy, Age  $\geq 18$   
Change Healthcare's InterQual 2017 Procedures Criteria, Arthroscopy or Arthroscopically Assisted Surgery, Knee