

# Authorization criteria: Cholecystectomy (laparoscopic) 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: \*47562, \*47563 and \*47564

## **Acute acalculous cholecystitis**

(Inflammation of the gallbladder without the presence of gallstones)

ALL the following:

1. Symptoms of ANY of the following:
  - a. Biliary colic (severe cramping in the abdomen)
  - b. Pain in the upper abdomen or back
  - c. Nausea or vomiting
  - d. Right upper quadrant tenderness by physical exam
  - e. Intolerance to food
2. Clinical findings of ANY of the following:
  - a. Temperature  $>100.4$  degrees F (38.0 degrees C)
  - b. Elevated WBC or C-reactive protein (above normal)
3. Absence of gallstones or sludge on ultrasound AND ONE of the following:
  - a. Gallbladder wall thickening on ultrasound
  - b. Pericholecystic fluid (fluid around the gallbladder) on ultrasound
  - c. Nonvisualization or recognition of the gallbladder by HIDA scan or MRI

## **Acute cholecystitis**

(Inflammation of the gallbladder with the presence of gallstones)

ALL the following:

1. Symptoms of ANY of the following:
  - a. Biliary colic
  - b. Pain in upper abdomen or back
  - c. Nausea or vomiting
  - d. Positive sonographic Murphy's sign (right upper quadrant tenderness to manual palpation or sonographic probe palpation)
2. Temperature  $>100.4$  degrees F (38.0 degrees C)
3. Elevated WBC or C-reactive protein (above normal)
4. ONE of the following:
  - a. Gallstones or sludge with gallbladder wall thickening or pericholecystic fluid (fluid around the gallbladder) on ultrasound
  - b. Nonvisualization / recognition of the gallbladder by HIDA scan or positive MRI

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## **Biliary colic**

(Severe cramping in the abdomen)

ALL of the following:

1. Recurrent pain in upper abdomen or back
2. ONE of the following:
  - a. Gallstones or sludge on imaging
  - b. Gallbladder wall thickening by imaging

## **Suspected chronic cholecystitis**

(Severe cramping in the abdomen)

ALL of the following:

1. Recurrent pain in upper abdomen or back
2. ONE of the following:
  - a. Gallstones or sludge on imaging
  - b. Gallbladder wall thickening by imaging

## **Gallbladder polyp by imaging**

ONE of the following:

1. Polyp size at least 10 mm
2. Polyp growing in size as identified on serial imaging
3. Sessile polyp (for example, a polyp with a broad base rather than being attached to tissue by means of a slender stalk)
4. Pain in upper abdomen or back

## **Gallbladder wall abnormality or suspected cancer**

ANY of the following:

1. Calcified gallbladder wall without metastases on X-ray or imaging
2. Gallbladder mucosal wall thickening on ultrasound without metastasis on imaging
3. Suspected cancer of the gallbladder

## **Suspected early stage cancer of the gallbladder by imaging**

BOTH of the following:

1. Liver function tests normal
2. No metastases by imaging

## **Gallstone pancreatitis**

ANY of the following:

1. Common bile duct stones OR dilated common bile duct enlargement identified by imaging and intraoperative cholangiogram planned
2. Plans for postendoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) imaging AND sphincterotomy OR stone extraction

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## Ascending cholangitis

ANY of the following:

1. Common bile duct stones OR dilated common bile duct identified by imaging and intraoperative cholangiogram planned
2. Plans for postendoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) imaging AND sphincterotomy OR stone extraction

## Suspected biliary dyskinesia

ALL of the following:

1. Recurrent pain after eating in the upper abdomen or back
2. Absence of gallstones or sludge by ultrasound
3. Gallbladder ejection fraction 35% or less or at least 80% (by CCK-HIDA scan)

## References

McKesson's InterQual<sup>®</sup> 2017 Procedures Criteria, Cholecystectomy, Laparoscopic, Age ≥ 18.

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*Consumer Reports Health*, "What's Fair? Fair healthcare pricing from Healthcare Blue Book: Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy." Data current as of March 2012

David H. Solomon, Robert H. Brook, Arlene Fink, R.E. Park, and Joan Keesey. "Indications for Selected Medical and Surgical Procedures – A Literature Review and Ratings of Appropriateness: Cholecystectomy," RAND/R-3204/3-CWF/HF/PMT/RWJ.

Guide to Inpatient Quality Indicators, Version 3.0 (February 20, 2006); 5.26 Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy Rate (IQI 23). AHRQ Quality Indicators Site: [www.qualityindicators.ahrq](http://www.qualityindicators.ahrq).

Elia Pulvirenti; Adriana Toro; Michel Gagner; Maurizio Mannino; Isidoro Di Carlo. "Increased Rate of Cholecystectomies Performed With Doubtful or No Indications After Laparoscopy Introduction," *BMC Surg.* 2013;13(17).