

January 16, 2009

Blue Cross medical policy for acne treatment/skin rejuvenation and rosacea treatment

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and Blue Plus medical policy II-33, acne treatment/skin rejuvenation states:

Treatment of active acne is considered accepted medical practice. The use of epidermal chemical peels is reserved for patients who have active acne that is refractory to antibiotic and topical therapies. The use of **dermabrasion, lasers, and blue light therapy** for the treatment of active acne is considered **investigative and not medically necessary**.

Treatment of facial scarring caused by acne with **dermabrasion or laserabrasion** is considered **cosmetic** and ineligible for reimbursement.

Use of retinoids, dermabrasion, laserabrasion, photodynamic therapy, and epidermal and dermal chemical peels to **rejuvenate** skin is also considered **cosmetic** and ineligible for reimbursement.

Blue Cross medical policy II-08, rosacea treatment states:

The medical management, including oral and topical antibiotics, isotretinoin, beta-blockers, clonidine, and anti-inflammatories, of the inflammatory papules and pustules and the erythema that surrounds them of active rosacea is considered accepted medical practice.

The use of **laser and light therapy, dermabrasion, chemical peels, surgical debulking and electrosurgery** to treat rosacea is considered **cosmetic** and ineligible for reimbursement.

The treatment of **telangiectasias** is considered **cosmetic** and ineligible for reimbursement.

Claim audits

Routine claim audits have disclosed that some providers have been submitting claims for therapies considered investigative, cosmetic or not medically necessary for acne and rosacea treatment.

Adherence and enforcement of policy

This Bulletin is a reminder that providers must abide by the requirements of all Medical Policies. Blue Cross is taking action to enforce Medical Policies II-33 and II-08. Claims for the treatment of rosacea, active acne, scarring, or skin rejuvenation with dermabrasion, lasers, and blue light therapy, will be subject to retrospective review and denial, as these services are not covered. To view medical policies go to **bluecrossmn.com** and select “for health care providers” then “medical policy” under “tools & resources.”

Questions?

If you have questions, please contact provider service at **(651) 662-5200** or **1-800-262-0820**.

Please route this bulletin to other interested staff.