

Screening Criteria for Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) Arthroscopy/Surgery

Description:

Arthroscopy of the temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is a diagnostic (CPT code 29800) and/or therapeutic procedure for visualizing and treating the pathologic changes associated with TMJ disorders.

Policy:

There are two basic types of treatment for TMJ disorders: surgical and non-surgical. The non-surgical approach must be utilized first in an effort to restore comfort, and improve jaw function to an acceptable level.

Non-surgical treatment may include the following in any combination depending on the case:

- fabrication and insertion of an Intra-oral Orthotic, (sometimes referred to as a splint)
- physical therapy treatments
- adjunctive medication
- stress management

Surgical treatment (CPT code 29804) may be considered when both of the following apply:

- Other conservative treatments have failed (must be **documented**), and chronic jaw pain and dysfunction have become disabling. Conservative treatments must be utilized for 6 months before consideration of surgery.
- There are specific, severe structural problems in the jaw joint. These include problems that are caused by birth deformities, certain forms of internal derangement caused by misshapen discs, or degenerative joint disease. For surgical consideration, arthrogram results must be submitted for review.

Not covered:

- Botox injections for the treatment of TMJ is considered experimental and is not a covered item.
- Orthodontics to alter the bite.
- Crown and bridge work to balance the bite.
- Bite (occlusal) adjustments.

Signature of Medical Director

Effective Date