

Excising Excessive Skin/Subcutaneous Tissue (Panniculectomy)

Panniculectomy is the surgical removal of a panniculus or excess skin and adipose tissue that hangs down over the genital and/or thigh area. Cosmetic surgery to reshape the normal structure of the body or to enhance a patient's appearance **is not** a Medicaid benefit.

Indications

A Panniculectomy may be considered medically necessary when meeting **ALL** the following indications:

1. Panniculus is Grade II* or more and documented by photographs

AND

2. Medical records and photographs document recurrent or chronic rashes, infections, cellulitis, or non-healing ulcers that do not respond to medical therapy/treatment for a period of three (3) consecutive months. Appropriate medical therapy/treatment includes topical antifungals, topical and/or systemic corticosteroids, and/or local or systemic antibiotics, in addition to good hygiene practices

AND

3. There has been significant weight loss*
 - a. If the weight loss was accomplished without bariatric surgery, the member must have maintained a stable weight for a minimum of 6 months and have a BMI of ≤ 35 ,
- OR
- b. If the weight loss is a result of bariatric surgery, a panniculectomy should not be performed until at least 18 months after surgery and only after weight has been stable for the most recent 6 months, and the member has a BMI of ≤ 35

Documentation Requirements

Required documentation includes the following:

1. Referring physician AND surgeon must provide documentation of medical necessity;
2. Physician documentation of compliance AND response to the 3 months of conservative, failed treatments for the recurrent or chronic rashes, infections, cellulitis, or non-healing ulcers;
3. Photographs documenting pre-operative conditions and verifying the grade of the pannus;
4. Documentation verifying height, starting weight, current weight, and stabilization of weight, along with 1-3 above.

Definitions*:

Significant weight loss:

A member having lost 50% of their weight in excess of their ideal body mass index (BMI). For example, if a patient's ideal weight is 150lbs, but their actual body weight is 300lbs, this represents 150lbs of excess weight. 50% of this excess weight (150lbs) would be when they achieve a weight of 225lbs or less.

Panniculus Grading:

Grade 1: the panniculus reaches the pubic hair but not the genitals

Grade 2: the panniculus lies over the genitals down to the thigh crease

Revised criteria_5/17/18

Grade 3: the panniculus reaches down to the upper thigh

Grade 4: the panniculus hangs down to mid-thigh level

Grade 5: the panniculus reaches the knees