



Rule Category:

Billing

Ref: No:

2020-BR-051

Version Control:

Version No.1.0

Effective Date:

13th June 2022

Last Update:

13th May 2022



Arthrocentesis

Adjudication Guideline

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Abstract

For Members

A procedure in which a sterile needle and syringe are used to drain fluid from the joint. This is usually done as an office procedure or at the bedside in the hospital. For certain conditions, medication is put into the joint after fluid removal. The needle is then removed, and a bandage or dressing is applied over the entry point. Joint fluid can be examined to determine the cause of the joint swelling, such as infection, gout, or rheumatoid disease. Arthrocentesis can be helpful in relieving joint swelling and pain.

For Medical Professionals

Arthrocentesis is the procedure of aspirating synovial fluid out of a joint. Arthrocentesis is similar in technique to joint injection – these two procedures can be performed during the same encounter in appropriate cases. It can be done for both diagnostic and therapeutic purpose

Anatomic approaches to specific joints and bursae:²²

The site of aspiration is based upon two principles:

- Easy access to the joint capsule with the least obstruction by bone
- Avoidance of neurovascular bundles

Approved by:
Daman

Responsible:
Medical Standards & Research

Related Adjudication Guidelines: NA

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Scope

This adjudication rule highlights the coverage details for medically necessary indications for Arthrocentesis as per the policy terms and conditions of each health insurance plan administered by Daman.

Adjudication Policy

Eligibility / Coverage Criteria

Indication ⁶:

Arthrocentesis can be used for diagnostic /therapeutic purposes to:

- Establish the diagnosis of an inflamed joint.
- Aspirate the effusion or hemarthrosis to reduce joint discomfort and prevent damage.
- Injection of medications (e.g., Corticosteroids)
- Identification of crystal arthropathy
- To aspirate if infection is suspected.

Complications ²:

- Infection
- Bleeding
- Increased pain

Contraindications:

- Skin infections such as cellulitis as seeding infection into the joint capsule may occur.
- Patients who are anticoagulated or have a bleeding diathesis (e.g., haemophilia or thrombocytopenia) are at increased risk for hemarthrosis.

Eligible clinician specialty:

Eligible Speciality
Orthopedic Surgery
Oral Maxillofacial Surgery
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Orthopedic Surgery/ Traumatology
Oral Surgery
Rheumatology
Internal Medicine/ Rheumatology
Rheumatology/Immunology and Allergy
Pain Medicine
General Surgery/ Traumatology
Anesthesia / Pain Medicine
Family Medicine / Pain Medicine
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

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Requirements for Coverage

ICD and CPT codes must be coded to the highest level of specificity.

Non-Coverage

- Arthrocentesis will not be covered by Daman (for any plan) if it is not supported by a medically justified indication/diagnosis.
- If Clinician specialty other than mention category will not be covered.
- Not covered for visitor plan

Payment and Coding Rules

Please apply regulator payment rules and regulations and relevant coding manuals for ICD, CPT, etc.

Denial codes

Code	Code description
MNEC-003	Service is not clinically indicated based on good clinician practise.
MNEC-004	Service is not clinically indicated based on good clinician practise, without additional supporting diagnosis /activities.
MNEC-005	Service / supply may be appropriate, but too frequent.
CODE-010	Activity/diagnosis inconsistent with clinician speciality.

Additional Information

JAWDA clinical quality KPI: Not applicable

Appendices

A. References

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4. <https://www.arthritis.org/>
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10. http://podj.com.pk/archive/June_2017/PODJ-3.pdf
11. <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT02530229>
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13. <https://academic.oup.com/rheumatology/article/51/1/184/1777012>
14. <https://www.outsourcestrategies.com/blog/arthrocentesis-key-coding-and-billing-points.html>
15. <https://www.cancertherapyadvisor.com/home/decision-support-in-medicine/hospital-medicine/arthrocentesis-joint-aspiration-and-injection/>
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19. <https://epmonthly.com/article/doc-are-you-sure-you-have-to-aspirate/>
20. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/arthrocentesis>
21. <https://www.healthgrades.com/right-care/joint-drainage/arthrocentesis>
22. Joint aspiration or injection in adults: Technique and indications - UpToDate

B. Revision History

Date	Change(s)
13 th May 2022	Release of V1.0

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