Title: METABOLIC AND BARIATRIC SURGERY MP9319 (III-SUR.30)

Effective Date: July 01, 2025

This policy was developed with input from specialists in general and bariatric surgery and endorsed by the Medical Policy Committee.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – PLEASE READ BEFORE USING THIS POLICY

These services may or may not be covered by all Medica Central plans. Coverage is subject to requirements in applicable federal or state laws. Please refer to the member's plan document for other specific coverage information. If there is a difference between this general information and the member's plan document, the member's plan document will be used to determine coverage. With respect to Medicare, Medicaid, and other government programs, this policy will apply unless these programs require different coverage. Members may contact Medica Customer Service at the phone number listed on their member identification card to discuss their benefits more specifically. Providers with questions may call the Provider Service Center. Please use the Quick Reference Guide on the Provider Communications page for the appropriate phone number. https://mo-central.medica.com/Providers/SSM-employee-health-plan-for-IL-MO-OK-providers

Medica Central coverage policies are not medical advice. Members should consult with appropriate health care providers to obtain needed medical advice, care, and treatment.

PURPOSE

To promote consistency between utilization management reviewers by providing the criteria that determines the medical necessity.

BACKGROUND

- I. Definitions
 - A. Asian Refers to a person having origins from the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent (e.g. Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam) (United States Census Bureau, 2022).
 - B. **Bariatric surgical preparatory program** is a multi-disciplinary approach to preoperative care of the bariatric patient. It encompasses bariatric surgical procedure education; dietary, nutrition, and exercise counseling; management of comorbidities; nursing care; and psychological evaluation and counseling, as warranted.
 - C. Body Mass Index (BMI) is a formula that uses a person's body mass (height and weight) to estimate that person's risk for morbidity and premature mortality. (See Appendix 1 Body Mass Index [BMI] Conversion Table.) A BMI between 35 and 39 is viewed as a very high health risk, while a BMI of 40 or more is viewed as an extremely high health risk. The BMI associated with the lowest mortality is between 20 and 25. Note: BMI is not to be used with certain groups of people (i.e., athletes, body builders, or pregnant women) who have high BMIs due to muscle mass, fetal tissue, etc.
 - D. **Combined restrictive and malabsorptive surgical procedures** restrict meal size and may alter the digestion process, thus causing food to be incompletely absorbed. Examples

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of combined restrictive and malabsorptive procedures include Roux-en-Y gastric bypass and biliopancreatic diversion with duodenal switch.

- E. **Estimates of adult height** are qualitative indices that assist a caregiver in determining whether a child is growing as expected. One commonly used tool is a growth chart, which records a child's height, weight, and head size over time. Other methods are the 'two years times two' method (i.e., doubling a boys height at age two; doubling a girls height at 18 months) or a mid-parental height adjustment measurement.
- F. **Metabolic surgery**, is a broader term that encompasses bariatric surgery and involves surgical procedures that alter the digestive system. Metabolic surgery aims to address metabolic disorders like type 2 diabetes (even without significant obesity), while bariatric surgery aims to treat obesity and related health problems.
- G. Obesity is a condition in which excessive body fat compromises organ systems, psychosocial well-being, and overall quality of life. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines weight higher than what is considered healthy for a given height is as being overweight or obese. Body Mass Index (BMI) is a screening tool for overweight and obesity. Overweight is defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 25 to less than 30. The CDC ranks obesity into the following classes:
 - 1. Class 1: BMI of 30 to less than 35
 - 2. Class 2: BMI of 35 to less than 40
 - 3. Class 3: BMI of 40 or higher. Class 3 obesity is sometimes referred to as severe obesity.
 - H. **Restrictive surgical procedures** reduce the size of the stomach and limit the amount of food that can be ingested at one time. Surgical incision and resection of the intestine is not involved. Examples of purely restrictive operations for obesity include adjustable silicone gastric banding (LapBand), sleeve gastrectomy, and vertical banded gastroplasty.
 - Skeletal (bone) maturity occurs when bone growth ceases after puberty and refers to demonstration of fusion of skeletal bones. Females reach skeletal maturity at approximately 16 years of age, while males reach skeletal maturity around 18 years of age. Radiographs of either the knee or of the hand and wrist with subsequent mathematical calculations are often used when exact measurement of skeletal maturity is warranted.
 - J. **Substance use disorder**, as defined by the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) is a problematic pattern of use of an intoxicating substance leading to clinically significant impairment or distress. The symptoms associated with a substance use disorder fall into four major groupings: impaired control, social impairment, risky use, and pharmacological criteria (i.e., tolerance and withdrawal).
 - K. **Super-obesity** refers to overweight individuals with a BMI of 50-60. Patients with BMI >60 are classified as **super-super obese**.
 - L. Sexual Maturity Rating (aka, Tanner stage/Tanner scale) is a measure of physical development in children, adolescents, and adults. The scale is named after its originator, James Tanner, a British pediatrician. The scale defines physical measurement of maturity based on external primary and secondary sex characteristics, such as breast or genital size, testicular volume, and development of public hair. (See Appendix 2 Tanner Stages).
 - M. Weight loss surgery encompasses major operations with significant risks of complications. The risks are reduced if the operation and follow-up care are performed by a specialist in bariatric surgery.
- II. Common surgical interventions
 - A. Purely Restrictive procedures:
 - 1. **Vertical banded gastroplasty** consists of constructing a small pouch by placing a vertical staple line along the lesser curvature of the stomach. An opening (or stoma) is created at the distal end of the pouch to allow food to pass normally, but more slowly, from the pouch to the stomach and then to the small intestines. The pouch generally



holds about one ounce of food. The person feels full quickly and experiences pain, nausea and/or vomiting when overeating. Both open and laparoscopic techniques are performed for this procedure.

- 2. Adjustable silicone gastric banding is similar in intent to the vertical banded gastroplasty except that an inflatable, adjustable silicone band is laparoscopically inserted around the upper stomach to create a small stomach pouch. An injection reservoir is enclosed under the skin's surface. The inflatable inner surface of the band is then injected with saline to a level suitable for food restriction and subsequent weight loss, as well as patient comfort. The degree of inflation can be adjusted by a clinician as needed. By removing the silicone band, the procedure can be reversed with minimal need for stomach reconstruction. Although most commonly inserted laparoscopically, this procedure can also be done using an open incision.
- 3. **Sleeve gastrectomy** is a restrictive procedure that is accomplished by removing the outer portion (upper curvature) of the stomach. This leaves a small sleeve of stomach, reducing stomach volume as much as 80 percent. The procedure was originally designed as the first step of a restrictive/malabsorption staged procedure but is recently being suggested as a primary (one stage) procedure.
- B. Combined Restrictive and Malabsorptive procedures:
 - 1. **Roux-en-Y gastric bypass** and its variants consist of two basic steps: creating a small stomach pouch and re-routing the intestines to connect to the pouch. First, a small gastric pouch is constructed, thereby partitioning the pouch from the remaining stomach. The intestine is cut, and the distal end of the bowel is attached to the pouch where the stoma is created. The remaining intestinal limb is reattached farther down the intestinal tract, thereby creating a Y-shaped limb of varying lengths. Gastric bypass procedures work by restricting food intake and by limiting the absorption of calories and nutrients. A gastric bypass is both a gastric restrictive and a malabsorptive procedure. Both open and laparoscopic techniques are performed for this procedure.
 - 2. **Biliopancreatic diversion with duodenal switch** combines biliopancreatic/intestinal bypass and stomach size reduction. First, a sleeve gastrectomy is done, creating a smaller stomach with both the esophageal connection and the pyloris valve remaining intact. Next, a shorter alimentary limb that carries food is created by connecting the ileum to just beyond the pyloris. A longer biliary limb runs from the duodenum and carries bile and pancreatic secretions. The biliary limb is then connected to the alimentary limb, creating a short common channel where limited fat absorption can occur prior to content entry into the colon. This procedure is primarily malabsorptive, with less restriction than that in the Roux-en-Y gastric bypass. Both open and two-stage laparoscopic techniques are performed for this procedure.

BENEFIT CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. Prior authorization **is required** for gastrointestinal surgery for obesity for the initial surgical procedure, for a surgical revision, and for a second procedure. Please see the prior authorization list for product specific prior authorization requirements.
- 2. Coverage may vary according to the terms of the member's plan document.
- 3. Gastrointestinal surgical procedures for obesity or surgery for weight loss not specifically mentioned in the Medical Necessity Criteria section *are investigative and therefore not covered*. These include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Open loop gastric bypass ("mini" gastric bypass; omega loop gastric bypass; singleanastomosis gastric bypass)
 - b. Unmodified biliopancreatic diversion
 - c. Combined vertical banded gastroplasty-gastric bypass
 - d. Magenstrasse and Mill Procedure (laparoscopic non banded vertical gastroplasty)
 - e. Transected silastic ring vertical gastric bypass (Fobi pouch)



- f. Transoral endoscopic procedures for obesity including, but not limited to, natural orifice transluminal endoscopic surgery and endoscopic revision following bariatric surgery (all methods including, but not limited to, endoluminal suturing and/or stapling, prosthetic insertion [e.g., intragastric balloon; endoluminal sleeve], or endoscopic sclerosant injection).
- 4. A second procedure for gastrointestinal surgery for obesity in the absence of complications *is not covered*.
- 5. A reversal (takedown) of gastrointestinal surgery for obesity in the absence of complications *is not covered.*
- 6. The following services *are NOT covered*:
 - a. Education classes
 - b. Liquid protein diet replacements/supplements
 - c. Over the counter appetite suppressants/weight loss medications
 - d. Over-the-counter vitamin and/or mineral supplements
 - e. Weight loss program fees.
- 7. If the Medical Necessity Criteria and Benefit Considerations are met, Medica will authorize benefits within the limits in the member's plan document.
- 8. If it appears that the Medical Necessity Criteria and Benefit Considerations are not met, the individual's case will be reviewed by the medical director or an external reviewer. Practitioners are advised of the appeal process in their Medica administrative handbook.

MEDICAL NECESSITY CRITERIA

- I. Indications for initial procedure in individuals over 18 years of age Metabolic and bariatric surgery (MBS) for obesity is considered medically necessary when documentation in the medical record indicates that **all of the following** criteria are met:
 - A. One of the following procedures is being requested:
 - 1. Open or laparoscopic Roux-en-Y (RNY) gastric bypass
 - 2. Laparoscopic adjustable silicone gastric banding
 - 3. Open or laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy
 - 4. Open or laparoscopic biliopancreatic diversion with duodenal switch (BPD/DS)
 - 5. Single anastomosis duodeno-ileal bypass with sleeve gastrectomy (SADI-S).
 - B. Psychiatric/psychological evaluation has been conducted by a *licensed* mental health professional, and **all of the following** are documented:
 - 1. Evaluation has been completed within the past 12 months.
 - 2. Confirmation of the individual's understanding of the full impact of surgery, including the risks and goals of the surgical procedure.
 - 3. Documentation of relevant behavioral health issues to be addressed as they pertain to post-surgical recovery and weight loss.
 - 4. Confirmation of individual's understanding of the importance of the after care plan.
 - C. The initial pre-surgical consultation with the bariatric surgical preparatory team has occurred at least one month prior to the date of surgery.
 - D. **One of the following** is documented:
 - 1. A BMI equal to or greater than 40 (class III obesity), and all of the following are documented:
 - a. BMI recorded at least one-month preceding surgery.
 - b. Participation in a diet, nutrition, and exercise counseling regimen as recommended and documented by the bariatric surgical preparatory team. -
 - 2. A BMI *between 35 and 39.9 (class II obesity)*, regardless of presence, absence, or severity of co-morbidities, when **all of the following** are documented:
 - a. BMI recorded at least one month preceding surgery.
 - b. Participation in a diet, nutrition, and exercise counseling regimen as recommended and documented by the bariatric surgical preparatory team.



- 3. A BMI of 30 to 34.9 (25 30 in Asian patients) (class I obesity), with metabolic disease (eg, type 2 diabetes mellitus) who do not achieve substantial or durable weight loss and improvement in co-morbidity (including hyperglycemia) despite optimal medical treatment.
- II. Indications for initial procedure in individuals less than or equal to 18 years of age Gastrointestinal surgery for obesity is considered medically necessary when documentation in the medical record indicates **all of the following** criteria are met:
 - A. The individual meets criteria I.A.- C., above,
 - B. BMI greater than 120% of the 95th percentile and a major co-morbidity, or a BMI >140% of the 95th percentile,
 - 1. BMI recorded at least one-month preceding surgery.
 - C. Participation in a diet, nutrition, and exercise counseling regimen as recommended and documented by the bariatric surgical preparatory team.

Note: 95% of estimated adult height has been achieved based on previously documented individual growth pattern (e.g., two years times two measurement, mid-parental measurement, growth chart tracking)

III. Indications for surgical revisions

Surgical revision following previous gastrointestinal surgery for obesity is considered medically necessary when documentation in the medical record indicates that **all of the following** criteria are met:

- A. One of the following procedures is being requested:
 - 1. Open or laparoscopic Roux-en-Y (RNY) gastric bypass
 - 2. Open or laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy
 - 3. Open or laparoscopic biliopancreatic diversion with duodenal switch (BPD/DS)
 - 4. Removal of adjustable_gastric band and/or port
 - 5. Vertical banded gastroplasty (VBG).
- B. Documentation in medical record of a surgical complication following the primary procedure and related medical confirmation (e.g., imaging results, endoscopic reports).

NOTE: Examples of complications include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Stoma ulcer or dilation
- 2. Mechanical obstruction
- 3. Significant malnutrition
- 4. Stenosis
- 5. Leakage (e.g., from staple line breakdown, distal stricture, band, port, tubing)
- 6. Esophageal or pouch dilation
- 7. Uncontrollable gastroesophageal reflux (with or without hiatal hernia), esophagitis, and/or vomiting
- 8. Gastric band erosion or slippage of gastric band or port
- 9. Infection around hardware (e.g., port used for band adjustments, staple line)
- 10. New or recurrent hiatal hernia
- 11. Gastric hemorrhage
- 12. Hardware failure/malfunction of a mechanical device
- 13. Gastrogastric fistula.

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS)

 For Medicare members, refer to the following, as applicable at: <u>https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/new-search/search.aspx</u>



WISCONSIN BADGERCARE PLUS

• For members with State of Wisconsin BadgerCare Plus review Forward Health website for coverage and prior authorization requirements. (Forward Health WI Portal)

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Original Effective Date	Created 05/12/2004
MPC Endorsement Date(s)	10/13/2004, 03/09/2005, 03/06/2005, 03/14/2007, 07/12/2006, 06/13/2007, 01/16/2008, 03/12/2008, 08/10/2008, 04/08/2009, 11/11/2009, 09/22/2010, 09/28/2011, 01/18/2012, 09/19/2012, 07/17/2013, 07/16/2014, 07/15/ 2015, 12/19/2015, 07/20/2016, 05/17/2017, 07/19/2017 02/21/2018, 04/18/2018, 08/15/2018, 11/21/2018, 05/15/2019, 10/16/2019, 08/19/2020, 01/20/2021, 05/19/2021, 04/20/2022, 06/15/2022, 08/16/2023, 04/17/2024, 05/2025
Administrative Updates	03/2006, 04/17/2024, 09/24/2024

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APPENDIX 1 – Body Mass Index (BMI) Conversion Table

													Testant	Body	/ Ma	SS	nde	x Ta	ble															
			No	mal			0	Verv	veigh				Obes	ė									ŭ	reme	obe	sity								
BMI	19	2	3	ន	33	24	25 2(5 27	1 28	29	30	3	32	33	34	35	36	37	88	39	8	4	2 43	4	4	46	47	\$	49	50	51	52	33	4
Heighi (inche	s) t					1.1								e	Body	Weigł	it (bo	spun		ang														
28	9	96	100	105	110	115	119 12	4 12	9 13-	t 138	143	148	153	158	162	167	172 1	1 1	81	86 1	91 15	36 20	1 20	5 210	1 215	220	224	229	234	239	244	248 2	53 2	28
28	94	66	104	109	114	119	124 12	8 13	3 13	3 140	148	153	158	163	168	173	178	83 1	88 1	93 1	98 2(3 20	8 21;	217	222	227	232	237	242	247	252 2	257 2	62 2	67
09	67	102	107	112	118	123	128 13	3 13	8 14.	3 146	153	158	163	168	174	179	184	189 1	94 1	99 2	04 2(99 21	5 22() 225	5 230	235	240	245	250	255	261 2	266 2	71 2	92
61	100	106	111	116	12	127	132 13	7 14	3 14	3 153	158	164	169	174	180	185	190	195 2	012	06 2	11 2	17 22	2 22	232	238	243	248	254	259	264	269 2	275 2	80 2	85
62	1 04	109	115	120	126	131	136 14	2 14	7 16.	3 156	164	169	175	180	186	191	3 961	202 2	07 2	13 2	18 2	24 22	9 23	5 240	246	251	256	262	267	273	278 2	284 2	89 2	95
ន	107	113	118	124	130	135	141 14	6 15	2 15	3 160	3 169	175	180	186	191	197	203	208 2	14 2	20 2	25 23	31 23	7 24	248	3 254	259	265	270	278	282	287 2	293 2	99 3	8
2	110	116	122	128	134	140	145 15	1 15	7 16:	3 165	174	180	186	192	197	204	209	215 2	21 2	27 2	32 2	38 24	4 25) 256	3 262	267	273	279	285	291	296	302 3	08 3	14
65	114	120	126	132	138	41	150 15	6 16	2 16	3 174	1 180	186	192	198	204	210	216 2	222 2	28 2	34 2	40 24	46 26	25	3 264	1 270	276	282	288	294	300	306	312 3	18 3	24
99	118	124	130	136	142	148	155 16	11 16	21 77	3 175	3 186	192	198	204	210	216	223	229 2	35 2	341 2	47 2	53 26	0 26	\$ 272	278	284	291	297	303	309	315 3	322 3	28 3	34
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159 16	6 17	2 17	8 184	191	198	204	211	217	223	230	236 2	42 2	249 2	55 21	31 26	8 27	1 280) 287	293	299	306	312	319	325	331 3	38 3	4
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164 17	1 17	7 18	4 19(197	203	210	216	223	230	236	243 2	49 2	56 2	62 21	39 27	6 28	286	3 295	302	308	315	322	328	335 3	341 3	48 3	2
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169 17	6 18	2 18	9 196	5 203	209	216	223	230	236	243	250 2	57 2	63 2	70 2	17 28	4 29	1 297	7 304	311	318	324	331	338	345	351 3	58 3	65
2	132	139	146	153	160	167	174 18	11 18	8 19	5 201	209	216	222	229	236	243	250 2	257 2	964 2	11.2	78 21	35 26	12 29	306	3 313	320	327	334	341	348	355	362 3	69 3	76
4	136	143	150	157	165	172	179 18	96 19	3 20	0 200	3 215	222	229	236	243	250	257	265 2	72 2	2 61	86 2	33 30	11 30	3 315	5 322	329	338	343	351	358	365	372 3	79 3	86
22	140	147	154	162	169	17	184 19	M 19	9 20	6 21	3 221	228	235	242	250	258	265	272 2	79 2	287 2	94 3	32 30	9 31	3 324	1 331	338	346	353	361	368	375	383 3	90 3	26
73	44	151	159	166	174	182	189 19	17 20	4 21	2 215	9 227	235	242	250	257	265	272	280 2	288 2	295 3	02 3	10 31	18 32	333	3 340	348	355	363	371	378	386	393 4	01 4	88
74	148	155	163	171	179	186	194 20	12 21	0 21	8 22	5 233	3 241	249	256	264	272	280	287 2	395 3	303 3	11.3	19 32	6 33	# 3	2 350	358	365	373	381	389	396	t04 4	12 4	20
75	152	160	168	176	184	192	200 20	8 21	6 22	4 23/	240	248	256	264	272	279	287	295 3	303 3	311 2	119 3.	27 33	15 34	3 35'	1 359	367	375	383	391	399	407	115 4	23 4	31
76	156	164	172	180	189	197	205 21	13 22	1 23	0 23(3 246	254	263	271	279	287	295	304 3	312 3	320 3	128 3	36 34	14 35	3 361	369	377	385	394	402	410	418	126 4	35 4	43
The BIV 3lood Ir sg/mete	11 de nstitu ∍r sq	scrik uare	oes r NHL >d, a	BI) a	tive i guic extre	weig Ielin me	ht for es cla obesi	hei(ssif) ty a	ght. ∕ové saE	It is erwe 3MI e	calc sight	culat as as al to	ed a BN BN or q	is wé 11 of reate	eight 25 ti er th	t (in hrou an 4	kilog gh 2 t0 kg	Jram 29.9 1/me	is)/ kg/r iter s	heiç nete squa	jht (i er sq	n me uare	eters ed, o	s) sq besi	uare ty as	d. T s a E	he N 3MI (Vatic equa	onal al to	Hea or g	irt, L reat	ung, er th	anc an 3	2

Adapted from: National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation and